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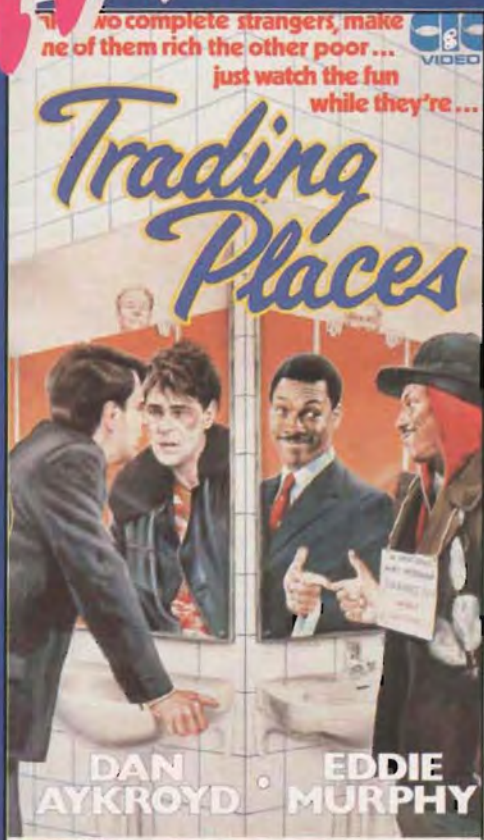
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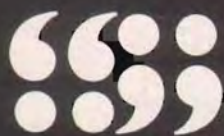
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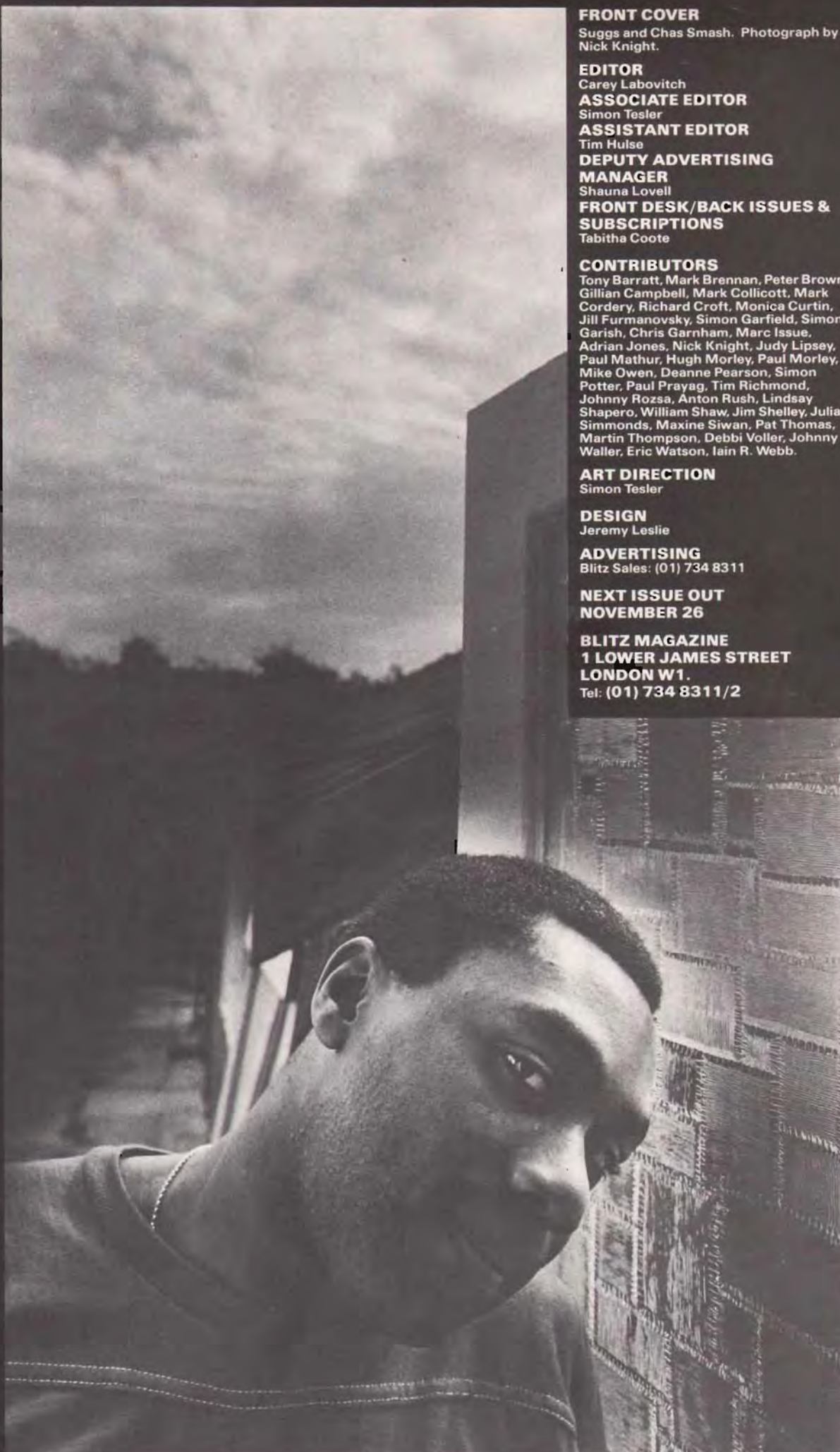
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BLITZ

**Bullshitters back with a bang • Rolling
Stones recalled • Book Reviews
Walk out to Workforce • *Journeying with
Josef K* • Junk Jewellery • Music Video**

J • I • G • S • A • W



● This photograph is by Chris Duffy, one member of the **Creative Workforce**, whose work will be on display at London's Hamiltons Gallery this month. With Rusty Egan, Steve Strange and PR Carol Hayes as directors, the Workforce umbrella embraces photographers, illustrators, choreographers, make-up artists, hair-dressers and stylists. As a result, a complete package can be offered to interested clients in such areas as fashion shows, promotional videos, fashion photography and advertising. The Workforce has an average age of twenty-six, and most of them are not at all bad at what they do. The team includes last month's BLITZ cover photographer David Levine, illustrator Edward Bell, choreographer and Glove vocalist Jeanette Landray and more. Worth a look.

The Creative Workshop Exhibition is at Hamilton's in Carlos Place, London W1, from October 29 to November 3.

T.H.

● If you were wondering what happened to your two favourite TV tough guys, then wonder no more, because... **The Bullshitters** are back! Oh yes, tune in to Channel Four at 11pm on Saturday November 3rd and enjoy the latest episode in the action-packed adventures of Bodie and Doyle, sorry—Bonehead and Foyle. They've been out of action for a while, of course (of course?), as a result of the now notorious 'Gay Serum' plot, which led to Bonehead 'coming out' on Hampstead Heath and being cashiered from the force. Naturally Foyle resigned as a point of principle. Back on civvy street, Bonehead has set up a School For TV Tough Guys, while Foyle is making a success of serious drama in the West End. So when Commander Jackson of DI5 contacts them again after his daughter has been kidnapped, they're none too keen to go back into action—until he shows them a few compromising photos of themselves found on the body of a Russian agent, that is. And this operation is so undercover that fast cars and walkie-talkies are out of the question—so they're equipped with a bag of 10p's and two London bus passes. Will the Commander's daughter be saved? More to the point, will she be saved from her middle-class aspirations of acting in Bill Forsyth comedies? Will the Arts Council pay the ransom? Will our heroes' true 'relationship' finally be revealed? Will The Professionals ever be the same again?

Sitting on the other side of two plates of spaghetti, Keith Allen and Peter Richardson are grinning away. Co-writers and co-stars of *The Bullshitters*, they're very pleased with themselves at the moment. Allen especially, since the idea of doing a full fifty minutes-worth has been with him ever since he used to do brief *Bullshitters* sketches on *Whatever You Want*. The two of them wrote the new full-length version in four days and with typical immodesty Allen describes the end result as "better than anything I've seen on television that anybody's written."

It isn't, of course, but it is well worth seeing if only to wonder at the remarkable similarity between Allen and Richardson and the real Professionals—Lewis Collins and Martin Shaw. Add to this the always welcome presence of Robbie Coltrane as the Commander, Alan(a) Pellay camping it up as one of the villains and a brief appearance (yes, another one) by Elvis Costello as an agent (a theatrical one) and you've got a highly enjoyable fifty minutes of, um... Bullshit, I suppose. And there's even room for a bit of sly comment on the role of Government arts funding and the acting profession itself.

Probably the most prestigious feather in the cap of *The Bullshitters* is the presence of Stephen (The Hit) Frears as director. In fact, Frears only arrived on the scene after a last-minute phone-call from Allen when all sorts of in-fighting had left the project temporarily direction-less. He'd never directed comedy before. "But his attitude to the film was just fantastic," says Allen. "He'd just stand there giggling while we were shooting, then say, 'Hmm. Do you think that works? Is that funny enough for you? OK, next shot.' He enjoyed himself, 'cos he'd just never worked like that



Foyle and Bonehead, alias Peter Richardson and Keith Allen.

before."

Meanwhile, as they say, Richardson is now at work on the new Comic Strip film, which he has written and stars in and is also directing(!). Allen is about to do some 'straight' acting for a change after landing himself a major role in *Comrades*, a film about the Tolpuddle Martyrs.

Bonehead and Foyle may well surface again in the future. Watch out for strange men with bus passes...

□ TIM HULSE



● An old gypsy woman in the heart of Czechoslovakia, her face numbed by anguish, cradles the head of her dead child; a group of Irishmen, their faces worn and creased, crouch on the top of a desolate mountain; a baby sleeps in a cot in an alley somewhere in England...

These three images form but a small part of the stunning selection of black and white photos taken by Czech emigré **Josef Koudelka** and currently on show at the GLC-threatened Hayward Gallery on London's South Bank. Now a freelancer for Paris-based photo

agency Magnum, Koudelka has spent twenty years capturing on film such subjects as East European gypsies and their ways of life and death, Russian invaders in Prague, and people at rest, play and worship across Europe. Cultural voyeurism? No sir! Koudelka's humanity and his ability to project the viewer straight into the heart of the photographic matter dispels that factor. Like former Magnum stars Capa and Brassai, Josef K is one helluvah picture-taker. Makes mucking about with polaroids so much origami...

□ ADRIAN JONES



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P R I N T

• Welcome to one of the few corners in British publishing where the obscure art of book-reviewing in a confined space is practised. This obscure art has many charms to recommend it, the greatest of which is the enormous conceit it endows on those few mortals who perform it. Watch and wonder, as I plough through no less than *nine* volumes in fewer column inches than it takes to describe this month's frocks! Hoop-la! We chew them up and we spit them out! Catch!

Catch Graham Swift's atmospheric masterpiece of the Fens, **Waterland**, now in paperback (*Picador*, £2.50) and the best value for money in the pile. Whether literary cults can be formed in three sentences is a feat never before attempted. So let's declare the Graham Swift Cult OPEN here and now, and see what happens. Probably not much.

Perhaps I should seek advice on the formation of cults from Peter York, who with **Modern Times** has economically re-cycled his pointed and ironic observations on British fashion (an unfashionable word), demonstrating once again the enormous entertainment value to be gleaned from flippancy about things that are dear to your heart. That's (*Heinemann*, £7.95)—you've got to be careful not to lose your publisher's credits on the fast bends here.

Moving down the page we catch a glimpse of one of the few Rock Books worth possessing—a monumental journal of Mr Bowie's circumnavigation of the planet last year entitled **Serious Moonlight** (*Sidgwick & Jackson*, £9.95). The text is actually readable, the pictures are superior to anything I've seen elsewhere and—Hey Presto! Exclusive!—there are excerpts from the Globetrotter's diary. I think this is the first Bowie prose in print in this country, but the cognoscenti will no doubt correct me if I'm wrong. They usually do. Anyway the book's great. Next!

Ah-ha! **The Dictionary of**

Contemporary Slang by Jonathon (sic) Green (*Pan*, £2.95) is worth a browse. The English tongue thunders on, consuming language and leaving a trail of lexicons in its wake. Slangophiles are like the mudlarks of linguistics, and they seem to have a great time, but if they stopped to smarten up their cross-references (something this book needs as a matter of urgency), they'd fall off the moving vehicle altogether. Green, I fear, has a pretty tenuous grasp on his subject(s): there are many slangs in here and most of them are wildly incompatible. If this got into the hands of an unscrupulous TV scriptwriter, I fear for the consequences.

Onward! **Queens** by Pickles (*Quartet*, £8.95) we can well do without, thank you very much. This is a pen-portrait of the gay landscape of London, and it *looks* reasonably accurate, and the dialogue is soundly constructed, but—and this is a very big but—the whole thing is underwritten with self-loathing, every word of it. Pickles presents a milieu that I could see a young man staying in the closet forever just to avoid. Surely it can't be as dismal and meaningless to be male and gay and in London as all this suggests? Now I know why they put 'non-scene' in the personal ads in the mags...

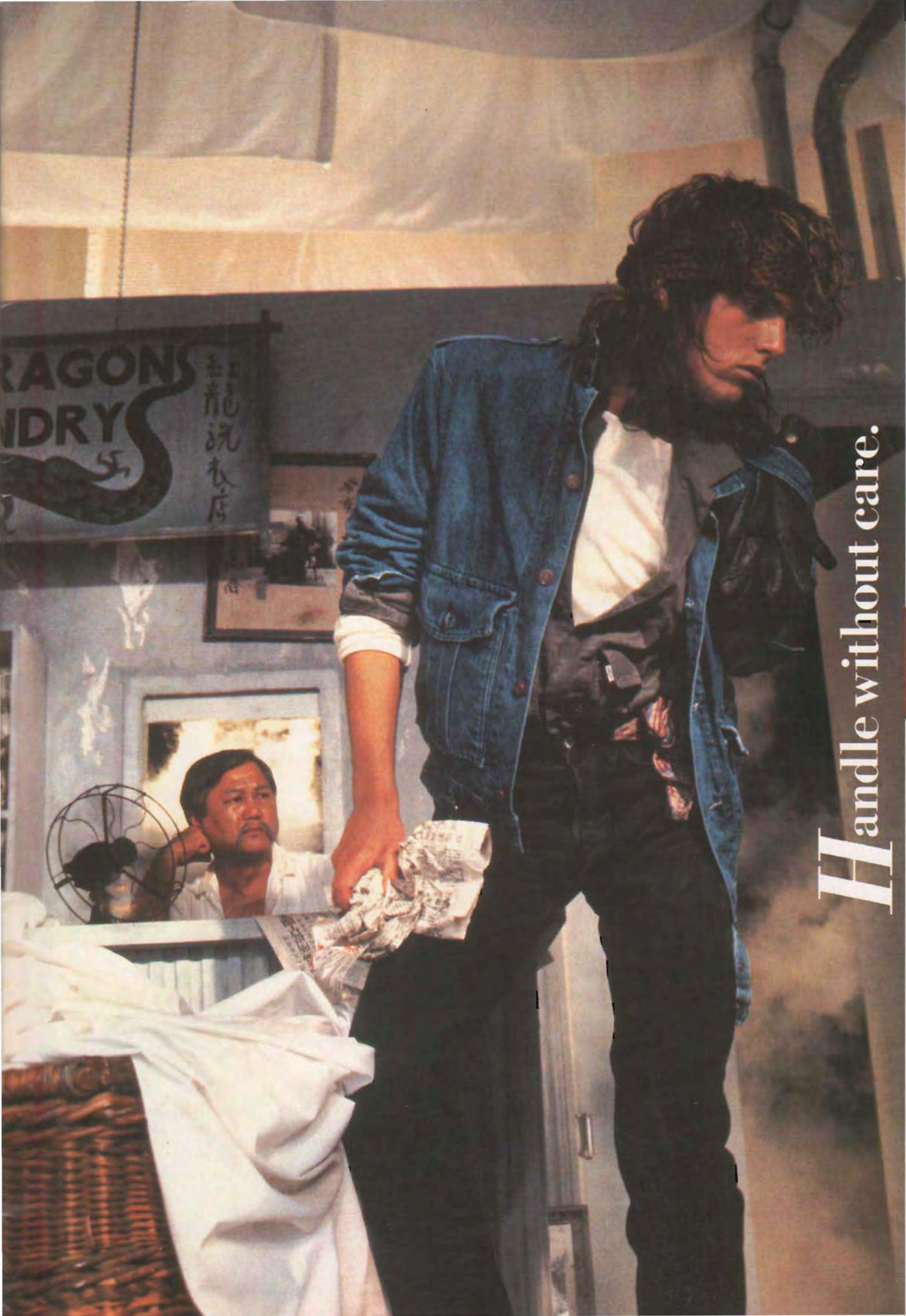
Scene. Catch **Let's Go Down The Cavern** by Spencer Leigh and Pete Frame (*Vermilion*, £5.95), the chronicle of That Time in Liverpool, mostly concerned with the also-rans. You'll love it if you're in it. And **Blood On The Tracks** by Chris Rowley (*Proteus*, £5.95) would be a very welcome biography of avenging angel-poet-turned-religious wally Bobby Zimmerman, if it were not for the pedestrian writing style. I am almost convinced that writers of Rock Books and writers of talent are mutually exclusive societies. Did I say it before? I'll say it again.

Number seven. No, that's eight... I've lost count, so I must be doing all right! **The Sony Tape Rock Review**, edited by Lesley-Ann Jones, Robin Eggar and Phil Swern (*Rambletree/Pelham*, £3.95). Foreword by a lifelike Bill Wyman puppet. I'm not disposed to argue with stuff like this—I believe you get more graven images, more golden calves for your money this way than most others, and this is large and brightly coloured, and I get the impression that it's meant to be put away in a cupboard and got out in ten years' time—much to the embarrassment of all concerned. Is this what we want to remember about 1984?

Ha! The bottom of the pile! **Blade on a Mirror** by Lesley-Ann Jones (*Arlington*, £9.95) is described as a 'novel' in the accompanying blurb. Well... this sort of thing gets put out by publishers all the time. Junk shops are full of them. Presumably it's on my desk because LAJ has been on the telly. Maybe it is of interest to young people. Probably not. If you're preparing your first novel out there, don't open this book, whatever you do—it'll depress the hell out of you. This is just plain old-fashioned, sloppy, terrible writing. Jones has blatantly gone out to undercut Jackie Collins on style, wit, and literacy, wins on all counts, and insults *everybody's* intelligence. Cynical.

□ MARC ISSUE

BLITZ



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NEW MUSIC VIDEOS
(RE)VIEWED BY SIMON GARISH
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 *** **Tools You Can Trust**
 ** **Remake Remodel**
 • **Shame Shame Shame**

● The bleary eyes and pock-marked face say it all, I'm afraid. What happens? I stray away for a couple of weeks for a few of those romantic Aegean nights and a torrent of music videos hit my desk. It's been strictly no sleep 'til Hammersmith as a result and quite frankly, Miss Haversham, my constitution is in need of a lift.

Compilations are Go! Or so it seems, and this month it's the Polygram collective who get their expenses signed for **Don't Watch That, Watch This** (Polygram)***. The static fades to reveal the best of the recent chart promos, like The Bluebells' *Young At Heart* and Tears For Fears' *Mother's Talk*. What lifts the assortment above the ordinary is the inclusion of material like *We Are Ninja* from The Frank Chickens and Feelabeelia's *Feel It*—clips that don't get enough exposure in VCRland.

Rock Cocktail (CBS/Fox)* on the other hand will leave you neither shaken nor stirred. There again, what do you expect when the menu consists of Journey, Quiet Riot and Toto? *Rock Cocktail*? Forget it, Joe, I'm leaving...

Film director Julien Temple can do no wrong these days it seems and once again he's got his finger on the button with **Rewind—The Rolling Stones Great Video Hits**

(Vestron)***. Bill Wyman is portrayed as a museum keeper, while Jagger is trussed up inside a display case in a



room full of old museum exhibits. Self effacement is the name of the game as Stones videos old and new are linked by the pair in wisecracking mood. Once again, those ageing moving targets dodge the flak, and some!

Six months of reviewing in-concert videos is too much for any mortal, but the food here is very good and the infrequent visits from family and friends are much appreciated. One group that didn't send flowers is **Twisted Sister**, but they must have been far too busy with **Stay Hungry** (Virgin)*, their woeful cliched heavy metal hoedown. Freddie Mercury is way ahead of Sister's Dee Snider when it comes to self parody, and it only takes the moustached one a handful of numbers to take off his shirt in **Queen, We Will Rock You** (Peppermint)**. You can follow Freddie's chest wig through twenty-one of their greatest hits, but for all

his camping it up, the set suffers somewhat from the hard rockin' arrangements. Quite nicely shot, though, but it won't win the neutrals over.

Hang on, there's the most awful moaning coming from the bed next door... Gracious! It's David Sylvian repeating the songs from **Japan, Instant Pictures** (Virgin)***. Wonder what he's in here for? Too much sushi, I suspect. Still, the Eastern imagery conjured up by the old chap isn't half bad, even if the image of the group performing them isn't that thrilling. Wait a minute, legs akimbo, arm outstretched in dramatic pose, who can that be down the corridor? If I didn't know better I'd say it was **David Bowie Live**

(Videoform)*** staging songs from his Serious Moonlight Tour. I seem to remember Part One being released as a video collection earlier this year which I heartily endorsed. This isn't quite as good, if only because the songs are better known and are too much a part of my subconscious. Of course that could be the fault of the hospital medicine. Even so, the show is masterfully directed by old hand David Mallet, and you certainly feel a part of the action.

Phew! I've weathered the ration of live videos for this month—the normalisation process begins here! Or does it? **Duran Duran are Dancing On The Valentine** (Picture Music)***, which, as the blurb tells you, is a video EP made up of their clips for *The Reflex*, *New Moon On Monday* and *The Union Of The Snake*. Director Russell Mulcahy has added some previously unseen footage, but if I

were you I'd OD on something else. How about a **Ready, Steady, Go Special Edition of Otis Redding** (Picture Music)****? No doubt about it—one of the finest purveyors of sweet soul music ever, caught in the surreal setting of the Ready, Steady, Go! studio with space cadet Cathy MacGowan. Classics like *My Girl* and *Respect* are given a deluxe wash and blow dry. But dry your eyes, sucker, this is tough!

Tougher still is **Labour Of Love** from **UB40** (Virgin/DEP International)****. The monochrome videos for *Cherry Oh Baby*, *Red Red Wine* and *Please Don't Make Me Cry* are padded out by extra footage acted out/adlibbed by the group and their friends to give us a convincing, bloody film short in the mould of the classic British 'kitchen sink' drama. Brownie points to director Bernard Rose for the moodiness and pace of the whole piece (which relegates Thriller to oblivion, incidentally).

Finally, I implore you to educate yourselves with **Hip Hop, A Street History** (Polygram)****. Dignitaries like Gary Byrd and Afrika Bambaataa take you on a tour of the Bronx's major money-spinning industries—break dancing, rapping, graffiti art and good times. Take your eyes away from the screen for even a second and you'll miss something important. Camera work second to none, and a subject that should be on every school curriculum.

There you have it then, my friends, the music video review that wouldn't lie down. Unfortunately its author does not possess the same energy. Chin! Chin!





● More delving into the **Rolling Stones** archives—despite Mick Jagger's forthcoming solo album (scheduled for release this month, you probably won't see it until next year), The Stones roll on regardless, now into their twenty-first year. Not too surprisingly, their coming of (old) age has been accompanied by a flood of biographical writings, of which the most recent is the really-rather-good-after-all **Satisfaction** (*Sidgwick & Jackson*, £7.97), Gered Mankowitz's book of photographs from the far-away days of 1965 and 1966. Mankowitz spent a year and a half as the Stones' 'official' photographer, accompanied them on the tour that broke them big in The States, and shot everything from their album covers to their passport photos. As you might expect, the result is a pretty comprehensive record of how Mick'n'Keef'n'Brian'n' the other two made their way from UK chart success to world notoriety. It's all here—how Mick made Marianne, how Bill used to

mouth his room number to eager young members of the audience, how Keith electrocuted himself onstage, how Brian was a general pain in the arse, how Charlie would much rather have been back at home with the wife. Most of it is interesting, much of it is fascinating—Mankowitz seems to have had his camera permanently at the ready, and the photographs—many of them previously unpublished—capture *everything*. Most extraordinary are the snaps of the Stones on tour, arriving in an armoured car, standing about while the local sheriff tells the audience to 'cool it', bringing the audience back to fever pitch again, then arguing with the authorities when the sheriff pulls out the plugs. The picture here was taken in Washington when four girls leapt on stage and began to molest Brian Jones. The motorcycle cop in the foreground was about to pull his gun on Mankowitz. Exciting stuff. I bet Mick Jagger would give anything to be nineteen again.

□ TOM ELIOT

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IS IT LOVE



Robert Redford returns in *The Natural* • Extraterrestrialism in John Sayles' *The Brother From Another Planet* • **Mastroianni gets smutty in *Gabriela* • Film News.**

F • I • L • M • S

THE NATURAL

Directed by Barry Levinson.
Robert Redford, Robert Duvall,
Glenn Close.

• Even if Hollywood's favourite son, Robert Redford, is beginning to look like your favourite shirt — worn and wrinkled but still a smash at the right party — it's apparently still acceptable for him to play a twenty year-old in the early parts of his new film. Since *The Natural* is highly implausible and hugely corny, perhaps it's fitting to see the Golden Wonder dashing about with a terminal look of youthful abandon on the face that launched the careers of a thousand plastic surgeons.

Semantics apart, Bob's back after a three year absence as farmer's son, Roy Hobbs, a 'natural' baseball pitcher. At twenty, he leaves his childhood sweetheart (Glenn Close) and the farm to try out for the Chicago team. But since this is the 1930's, when all manner of dodgy characters were standing in the shadows, something rather unfortunate happens to Hobbs on the way to the changing rooms. Sixteen years later, with hardened cynicism replacing youthful abandon and without a word of explanation, Hobbs re-emerges to pursue the elusive ambition of being "the best there ever was".

An intriguing air of mystery hangs over most of the film, despite a somewhat dodgy script which has Redford gazing romantically into the eyes of his loved one and murmuring the immortal words, "God, I love baseball". But even though Hobbs tends to wallop the ball best when thunder and lightning are striking — at the same time, of course — the overall look is exceptional, direction is well crafted by Barry 'Diner' Levinson and Bob is well supported by a decent cast which includes Robert Duvall who, it says here, "brings his granite force to the role of Max Mercy, a gimlet-eyed sports columnist". I couldn't have put it better myself . . .

The Americans have dubbed *The Natural* a cross between *Rocky* and *Star Wars* in terms of its heroics, and they probably basked in every star spangled moment; the English, ever warped, were rolling in the aisles for the most part. Who cares? I loved it.

JUDY LIPSEY



Big Bob—so Natural.



Joe Morton models extraterrestrial chic

THE BROTHER FROM ANOTHER PLANET

Directed by John Sayles. Joe Morton, Dee Dee Bridgewater.

● Ah-ha! The new John Sayles film! I suppose the first thing you want to know is, is it the new *Lianna*, or is it the new *Piranha*?

Well... it ambles along quite sociably inbetween, as a matter of fact. It's *The Black Man who Fell to Earth*, and he's a runaway slave from another galaxy contemplating New York's underlife. Joe Morton's 'innocent abroad' is well equipped — with ET-style glowing fingers which have magical healing properties equally applicable to grazed knees on small children and to clapped-out computer games. Through these same fingers he can hear the ancient echoes of previous arrivals in the empty halls of the Ellis Island immigration buildings in a delightfully transparent opening scene. And he has this rather literal ability to... keep an eye on things, which is best left undescribed, if it's all

the same to you.

Sayles aims a few passing shots at rich white heroin traffickers, low-rent bureaucrats and half a dozen or so other lumps in the low life, and usually hits his target — leaving one wishing he'd swung a little harder in the first place — his little victories are often tainted with whimsy as they stand here.

The individual scenes are cleverly and wittily constructed, but the indifferent continuity between them, and the rather casual approach to plot development suggest that the sketches have been all but fully formed before Sayles remembered that the plot had to be skewered through them; this makes for an experience more akin to hearing an album of songs than hearing a story told, but what the hell...

Despite its many flaws, *The Brother* is well worth seeing for its more numerous good, almost great passages. It's worth the gate money, all things considered.

□ MARC ISSUE



And in case you're wondering, no, he doesn't do it with the horse as well. They're just good friends. Marcello Mastroianni in *Gabriela*.

GABRIELA

Directed by Bruno Barreto. Marcello Mastroianni, Sonia Braga.

● With the film only three-quarters done, half the original audience had dispersed itself about the West End, presumably in the common purpose of putting as much distance as possible between themselves and the questionable spectacle of Marcello Mastroianni coupling at regular intervals and less regular angles with mucky Sonia Braga. The purpose of their flight is clear then, the motive less so. Were the men envious of the fervour with which this 60 year-old set about the sultry South American actress? Were the women repulsed by that same flabby, coronary-inducing passion? Whatever the reason, only a spattering of weary reviewers stayed to see if even the toilet, the last remaining unsullied room in the house, would provide the venue for one of their frantic encounters. Mastroianni plays the bar owner in

a small Brazilian coastal village, which is governed in effect by a tight, despotic circle of colonels. The social climate is so male-oriented and oppressive as almost to require any cuckolded husband to kill his wife and her lover in order to re-assert his community standing. Whatever happened to blackmail? In any case, this is the backdrop to the exhausting love affair already mentioned. Director Bruno Barreto would have done much better, however, to reduce this relationship to the scale of the others which are featured here and concentrate on his film's strength, which lies in the evocation of a claustrophobic, gossip-loving, small town in the throes of change. At times, the town's backwater ambience is reminiscent of the television *Clochemerle* which also struck the precise, understated, rural note.

The gradual liberalisation of moral and social attitudes is confidently suggested here, and is, naturally,

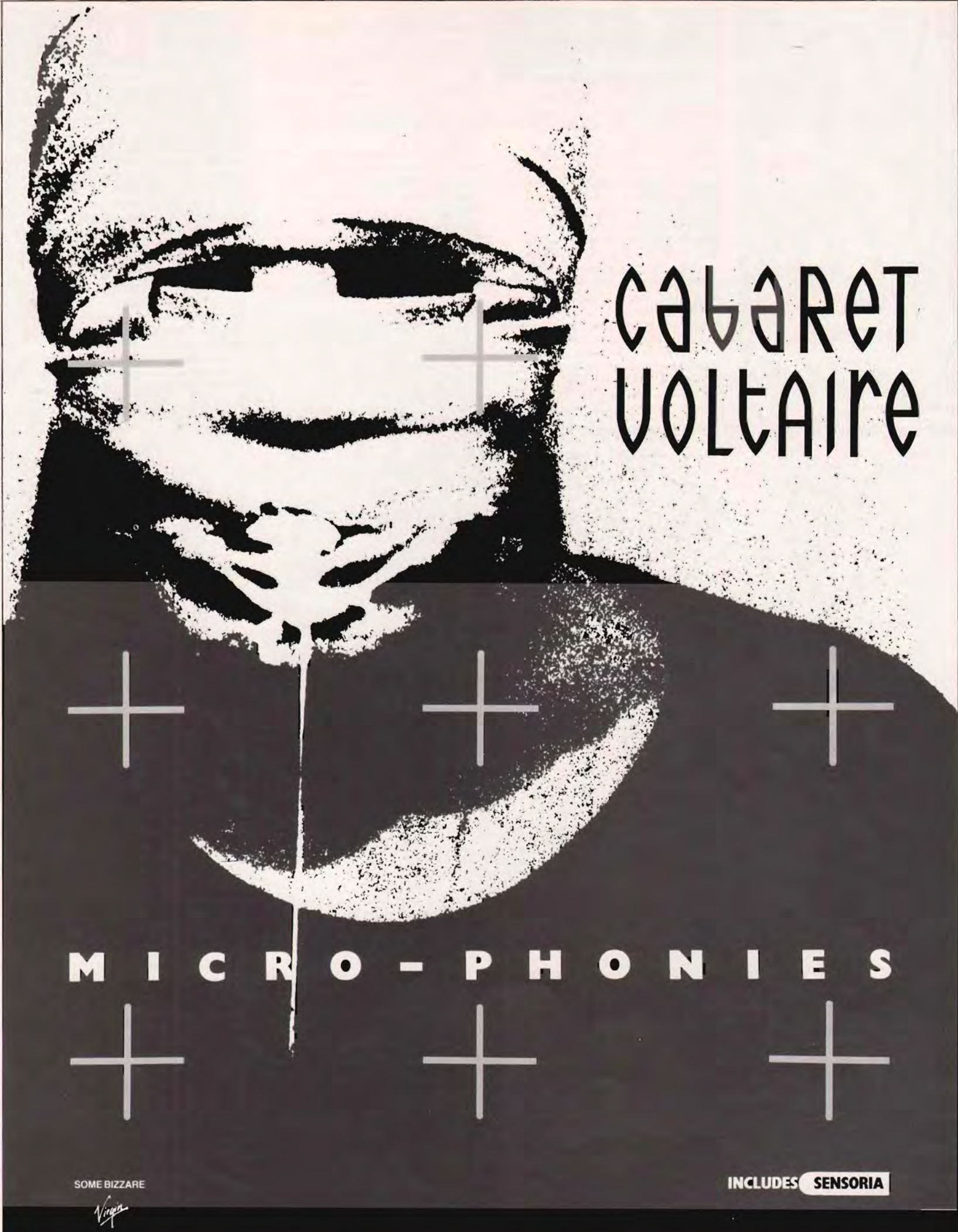
inextricable from the inhabitants' sexual behaviour, but one asks oneself really what narrative purpose is served as one sees Mastroianni sneak up on Braga for the *n*th time as she prepares a meal or goes about the gardening. According to one American Critic, quoted on the advertising poster, she is "tastier than a cup of Brazilian coffee and a lot sexier," which I'm sure Braga will find a source of great professional encouragement. Which reminds me, I met a gorgeous capuccino the other day...

Braga, of course, plays the title role and that about says it all, since *Gabriela* turns out to be little more than a vehicle for her dark looks and gyrating loins. The original novel, incidentally, by Jorge Amado, was hugely successful in the Americas and even became a TV series in Brazil, which perhaps says even more.

□ MARK BRENNAN

N·E·W·S

● When you're hot, you're HOT. *Ghostbusters* opened in US cinemas only 20 weeks ago, and doesn't open here till next month, but it's already one of the most successful movies of all-time, currently holding the no. 7 position with a box-office taking of more than \$110,000,000. The new Top Ten looks like this: no. 1 is still *E.T.* with \$209m, then *Star Wars* (\$193m), *Return of the Jedi* (\$165m), *Empire Strikes Back* (\$141m), *Jaws* (\$133m), *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (\$115m), *Ghostbusters* (\$110m), *Indiana Jones & The Temple of Doom* (\$100m), *Grease* (\$96m), and *Tootsie* (\$94m). **Meanwhile, Bill Murray stars in a remake of Somerset Maugham's *The Razor's Edge*, and will go on to make *Club Paradise*. Dan Aykroyd is due to start *Spies Like Us* with Chevy Chase. **While Murray, Aykroyd and Chase go on to greater things, sadly much intrigue still surrounds the drug overdose death of fellow *Saturday Night Live* star John Belushi last year. One of Belushi's female friends has recently been ordered to stand trial for his murder, and Bob Woodward's book about Belushi, *Wired—The Fast Life and Short Times of John Belushi* (published in the UK by Faber & Faber later this year) is to be turned into a movie. Says the producer, "We're not going to make a movie about big name actors shooting up in Hollywood... We want to make a movie like *Lenny* about the great comedic rise and then deterioration of this talented man." **On a very different note, Spielberg's film of *Peter Pan* will start shooting in March, but the lead will definitely not be taken by Michael Jackson. "Michael is a very close friend of mine," says Spielberg, "but he never was, and never will be, Peter Pan." **Frank Zappa's fifteen year-old daughter Moon Unit, vocalist on *FZ's Valley Girl* single, is making *Killers* alongside former English public schoolboy Maxwell Caulfield (nee Cornell) whose last film was the abysmal *Grease II*. **In the discussion stages: Orson Welles is mulling over *Satan and Eve*, with Welles as God, and Mick Jagger as the Devil. **Tina Turner co-stars with Mel Gibson in *Mad Max III*. **Clint Eastwood has started work on *Pale Rider*, his first western for eight years, and the story of a stranger in town who gets involved in the war between independent gold prospectors and big combines. **And finally... Ken Russell's new movie *Crimes of Passion* is a semi-humorous examination of American sexual mores, starring Anthony Perkins and Kathleen Turner. By all accounts it's absolutely dismal—US showbiz bible *Variety* described it as "dismally written," "painfully pretentious," "shabby, overt and gratuitously brutalising." It's bound to go far... □ SIMON TESLER



CABARET VOLTAIRE

M I C R O - P H O N I E S

SOME BIZZARE

Virgin

INCLUDES **SENSORIA**



BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

(OR JUST MORE ZTT PROPAGANDA ?)

Photographs by Peter Brown
Styling by Iain R. Webb
Hair and Make-up by Debbie Bunn







MORLEY

a regular column starts this month

...So I stopped interviewing other people and I let them interview me. I'm pretty good at being interviewed (stop me if you've heard this one before) because I tell good jokes and know something about myself. After years of interviewing people like Wham, Duran Duran and Paul Weller I know how important it is to know something about yourself. (For example—and hit me if you've heard this one before—knowing whether you're a subjective or objective narcissist.)

Being interviewed became a favourite hobby this year. I've some tips, for when it's your turn. What you do, you see, is let the interviewer believe that they're plucking bright things from your mind and memory that no one else could. Ignore the questions, talk like hell, and act surprised at what you're saying, like you've never heard the like before. The interviewer then feels a good job is being done, and doesn't have to make anything up. Unless it's the Daily Mail.

It helps to know what you're talking about, to have ideas and ideals: if you know what you're doing and why and all that, and it's more than just sin and money (more?), then you'll be an enchanting, provocative interviewee, you can dance right through the obvious and repetitive questions, and it all looks quite wonderful in print.

"What is your worst feature?"

(long pause) I'm a snob.

"And your best?"

I'm a snob.

It started after making an unchristian name for myself as a sensitive writer for the New Musical Express. Some slim spring onions decided to interview me for their fanzines—they put together pop

fanzines because they wanted to be me, legitimately big-headed, reluctantly indulgent, and all they really wanted to know was how they could get into the NME. I told them, I'm trying to get out. Soon I could tell Blitz that I'd *got* out. I've been interviewed ever since.

"So why did Trevor Horn ask you to make public his record label?"

I told good jokes and—kill me if you've heard this one before—wanted just like him to sell millions of records of extraordinary quality, insight and fascination.

"What does Zang Tuum Tumb stand for?"

The power of the imagination.

It was no longer green fanzines interviewing me. European pop magazines were the first to be dumbfounded by the nosy NME star forming a record label: they thought we'd be signing things like Throbbing Gristle, but they forgot how much I loved The Monkees.

As Frankie Goes To Hollywood became tabloid stuff, the toilet papers were talking to me, the Mail, the News Of The World, the Express, delighting me with their rotten misquotes, and some journals even began quoting McLuhan and MacLaren in connection with my involvement—a further delight, if only because it is *obvious* that Roland Barthes, Saatchi and Saatchi and Jonathan King are more relevant. The CND youth magazine got dead serious. Accolade! —Pete York expressed an interest in talking to me, for which he earned two Camparis in a Newcastle pub. Time Out blow-jobbed me over three pages: Morley in full flow, in full colour, ego sticking out

of those cheeks, tongue sticking into that one. What a good hobby this is! And what a good job that I had lots of things to say. The Americans turned up—the Wall Street Journal:

"The thing about Morley and ZTT is that they're all so obviously pleased with their success."

And now, I see there's a summit, or something, to this thing. The Sunday Times Magazine. For some reason, The Sunday Times' Washington correspondent is the man who's interviewing me, but the last profile he worked on was about Sam Shepard, so I don't feel let down. Even better, he realised that my interview with Phil Collins was hysterical, not nasty, and that my Police-In-India report was quite rewarding. He went through my life with awful scrutiny—I got pretty solemn at one point and forgot my script—and I'm glad that this is some kind of summit, as even I'm beginning to get a bit tired talking about myself. I'll probably get over it. Then BLITZ wanted me to wear shorts and dress up as The Alcoholic next to The Beauty, and I felt properly arrived as a kind of equivalent to Norman Mailer, or Lorraine Chase, or Bernard Manning. Now I can really get going.

Then The Sun rang up to see if it was true that I was getting married. They were told to fuck off. I've decided to begin turning down some interviews now. Auberon Waugh, Martin Amis, John Mortimer, Melvyn Bragg—they're the kind of people I might let interview me. And I've always fancied a front cover somewhere. What else can you do in the 20th Century but be noticed.

Disappear?

★ Cream waterproof raincoat, £190, by Katherine Hamnett; Black raincoat by Matsuda; Cream leather hat, £85, by Wendy Dagworthy; Black cord and fur hat, to order, by Bernstock-Speirs; Mirrored sunglasses, £12.50, by Justin Steel.

● Navy wool blazers, £136, by Katherine Hamnett; Patterned boxer shorts, £25.95, by Coup De Coeur; Navy blue knee-length

socks, £4.95 per pair, from Harvey Nicholls; Navy beret, £1.99, from Chelsea Girl.

○ Tapestry suits, £230, by Stephen King; Shirts, £35 each, by Stephen King; Ties from a selection at 20th Century Box; Rock jewellery with diamante detail, £15.95, by Ann Fern for Fred Spur.

◆ Ties by Charles Jourdan, Kenzo, Harvey Nicholls. All from Harvey Nicholls. Katherine Hamnett from Joseph,

Sloane Street, London SW1., and Chinese Laundry, Kings Road, SW3.; Stephen King and Justin Steel from Stephen King, Kings Road, SW3.; Harvey Nicholls, Matsuda and Fred Spur from Harvey Nicholls, Knightsbridge, London SW1.; Bernstock-Speirs from Joseph (address as above); Wendy Dagworthy from Jones, Kings Road, London SW3., and The Clothes Shop, Weybridge, Surrey.

Nephew of the famous Lew, Michael Grade is continuing the traditions of a family which has been synonymous with the British entertainment industry for much of the last fifty years. Still only 41, he was recently appointed Controller of BBC 1.

"I WAS BROUGHT up with money, which I suppose accounts for a lot. But I'm just beginning to learn how to live without it. I suppose I must have taken one of the biggest pay cuts ever..."

Don't feel too sorry for Michael Grade. The man who took over as Controller of BBC-1 just a few months back still smokes one of those bulbous, flaking cigars and seems extraordinarily happy for someone who's just had his gross annual income reduced by an estimated £150,000. Little wonder really: he's back in the country where the name of Grade has been synonymous with entertainment success since TV began and for some time before; he's just put behind him three uncharacteristically unsatisfying years locked into the grid of a nuclear ratings war as the president of a production company based in Los Angeles; and he has, after all, just taken over what he regards as the most exciting job in British television.

He comes at a time when the tabloids talk of 'crisis' at the Beeb, when the bods at the Edinburgh TV festival embrace rumours of the axeing of such things as *Breakfast Time* with glee, and when major shuffles at the top have given rise to a certain awareness that *something* will change soon (and that it'll be pretty dramatic when it does). At 41, Grade shoulders more responsibilities than he himself would care to admit. He claims his main role is to make consistently good quality, entertaining and popular programmes. His staunch Beeb critics say he's there merely to work miracles with the ratings (and if that means compromise, then so be it).

"What nonsense!" shrugs Grade in a smoke-choked sixth-floor office at Television Centre. "The fact is that when the BBC want to be popular they do it with a style and a quality that ITV can never match."

When we spoke, Grade had been at the BBC for exactly three weeks. He admitted he was still finding his way in the maze of corporate administration. He hadn't yet had time to customize his office in Grade colours, but when he does it's unlikely that he'll follow family tradition. Whereas his uncle may have gaudied up the walls with a framed photo of crumpled pantomime horses in full gallop on *Sunday Night at the London Palladium* (or



something like that), his nephew would probably put up something altogether more cultured. Like a pastel portrait of Melvyn Bragg.

For while Grade still has the family taste for the big cigar and the continental tan, he certainly enjoyed a far superior education to his elders. A string of famous public schools, by most accounts unhappy years ("I remember being bitterly disappointed when a housemaster wouldn't allow me to bring a portable TV into my room") were nonetheless brightened by an early enthrallment with romantic television serials and a great love of

music. The latter has waned as little as the former.

Influence and the family name led to a job as a 17 year-old sports reporter on the *Daily Mirror*. He left six years later to prop up one part of the Grade organization when his father fell ill, and later jointly formed the hugely successful talent agency London Management, where he earned himself, for better or worse, a reputation as 'the man who discovered Larry Grayson'. He was recruited into the (at that time) ailing London Weekend TV in 1973, aged only 30.

It would be wrong to suggest that his



GRADE expectations

● Interview by Simon Garfield
● Photographs by Richard Croft

manoeuvring behind a certain 'Snatch of the Day'.

Five years ago Grade drew up a scheme whereby ITV would buy out all TV soccer coverage and leave the Beeb with an hour of Jimmy Hill's chin every Saturday but absolutely no goalmouth action to go with it. He presented the Football League with what amounted to a £5m deal in a secret hotel meeting behind the backs of both BBC and ITV executives, but the Office of Fair Trading upheld an ensuing flood of objections and kicked the whole idea into a crowd of angry faces from both stations. The man was not popular. Not only had Grade sneaked a flirting pass without their approval, but his move resultingly upped the price of football for both BBC and ITV.

Many felt the BBC would never forgive him. Instead, after a lengthy pause for recovery, they wined and dined him, courted him across a continent, and offered him one of the top five posts in their empire. A former colleague at LWT recently likened the move to "the established church . . . inviting in the anti-Christ".

Grade claims there was never any personal animosity. "It was far more of an institutional grudge. Even at the height of the football deal I remember meeting several very senior BBC officials at a social function and being greeted very warmly—by the throat! But the successes that we had at LWT, some of them in areas where the BBC had previously held the high ground, I think were quite admired and respected, as opposed to the object of jealousy. The one thing that really matters here is good programme making."

THE OFFER to join the Beeb seemed to come at an ideal time for him. It meant upheaval—particularly for his second wife, an executive with a US film distributor—but it also meant escape from a three-year stint of little joy in L.A., a period of moving sideways crab-style—and that's putting Grade's frustration mildly.

"I went to America first and foremost because they offer you incredible sums of

money that are very hard to resist, and also because I was scared of getting stale at LWT. You can't do that job for too long before you start to get blasé."

L.A. disappointed him for reasons that he flippantly likens to matrimony. "It's like marriage in the sense that you never know until you live it. You can go away for a few dirty weekends but it's not the same. The pressures in America came from too many sources. The corporate structure was very different—it was all short-term, bottom-line thinking. Their idea of creating exciting programmes was to go out with a cheque-book and buy the best people they could, and if those people hadn't come up with something in six months they'd pay them off and get another lot in. I was actually told to do that. I told them that's not actually the way you do it, and that you nurture talent slowly, but the stakes are so high that they can't afford to wait."

Grade trumps up the ultimate irony. He says that one of the owners of Embassy Television, the company he worked for for the first two years, took eight times as long as the six-month norm to make *All In The Family*—the programme that laid the foundation for the whole company.

The other consistent pressure proved to be the selling, or more accurately the flogging, of programme ideas to the networks. "The nonsense of it is that it's not the *idea*, it's not who's doing it, it's simply how well you can *sell* the idea in eight minutes that counts. In all my time there I only met one man in the whole of American broadcasting who actually asked the questions that I hadn't thought of myself in terms of what the idea was, where it was going and so on. The rest of them all just burble on about research and 'why don't you add a brother?' and 'what if he had a dog?'"

His former boss at Embassy had a foolproof how-to-get-round-the-networks theory, and it invariably meant compromise. If the plan was to do a show about a black-white mixed marriage, you first had to sell them a show about three tits-and-ass air hostesses sharing a flat, one of whom was black. When you've got a monster hit on your hands you slowly work in a white male neighbour who *eventually* marries the black air hostess . . . ▶

appointment as Deputy Controller of Programmes (Entertainment) transformed the station. Even more wrong, perhaps, to ignore the rapid turnaround in LWT's fortunes in the years that followed. For by the time he took over as Director of Programmes in 1977, he had created an atmosphere where creativity flourished in Independent TV as it seldom had before. *The South Bank Show*, the Alan Bennett plays, the Dennis Potter plays, *Weekend World* and three Prix Italia awards—all were, at least in part, the result of Grade's eye for intelligent programming. Then again, so was what many regarded as the filthy

GRADE

"An English writer told me that he'd been commissioned by an American production company to create a show that had a sort of loner character in it. He went away and came back with the whole set-up and they said 'Yeah! Loner!! This is just what we're after! But why don't we give him a sidekick?' And they started adding ingredients and characters around this loner and he ended up absolutely surrounded, totally submerged by people around him."

PRESS GRADE about his biggest achievement out there and he'd probably cite a six-part series of Jeffrey Archer's *Kane and Abel*, made by the production company he formed after leaving Embassy. His biggest disaster was probably a high-school series called *Square Pegs* that collapsed under a cloud of allegations regarding on-set drug use (which Grade investigated but discovered to be quite unfounded). He also regrets that he probably didn't even leave a mark on American TV. "There was no chance. Even the greatest people there, all of whose abilities are proven and marvellous, even *they* have to go through the mill and have their ideas turned down. It's unbelievable. There's just no trust."

From the other side of the ocean, he followed the emergence of Channel Four with obvious interest. Ultimately, perhaps, it was indirectly the spur for his return to the BBC. "Channel Four has changed broadcasting quite dramatically. What is happening is that the ITV channel-1 commitment to serious programming and public service broadcasting is being relaxed considerably, and the IBA is adopting a far less strict attitude towards it. Things are happening in the ITV-1 schedule that I would never have been allowed to do three years ago. It's just that the IBA sees all these worthy programmes on Channel Four and hence the rules can change on Channel-1. That of course is having an effect on BBC-1, which is in the glare of the ratings spotlight."

Ah, them ratings... Ask most TV critics why Grade's been appointed at the Beeb and you'll be told that his role is to 'rescue' the channel from 'defeat' in the ratings war.

"You *can* take ratings too seriously, you know," counters Grade with the smile of someone who's been down this road many times before. "Obviously we want our programmes to be watched by as many people as possible. But the difference between here and ITV is that we get our viewing figures in total isolation and say 'this programme got four million or ten million', whereas at ITV we always looked at our own ratings in relation to what was happening on BBC 1, because that was how the advertisers looked at it. At the BBC we'd never say 'Christ, we got killed last night! *Coronation Street* got fifteen million and we only got eight million!' Failure is only when you set out to be popular and you're not."

Grade's current plans are rather vague, and after three weeks you wouldn't expect anything else. More to the point, if he had any world-shaking ideas I wouldn't exactly expect him to tell *me* about them. But it wouldn't be unduly pessimistic to say that you won't see any marked effect of his scheduling for at least a year, maybe two. The long shot, he



says, is to produce things that the audience have never seen before in any form. The shorter-term goal is to "create an atmosphere in which there is a much more relaxed structure, of the sort we had at LWT". And he fears that the size of the Beeb machine might just make that impossible.

What *is* likely is that Grade will encourage an enormous gush of creative talent who, previously, may well have approached only ITV. For among programme makers themselves he remains one of the most respected executives in British TV, and no small part of this stems from his brazen ability to take criticism and act on it. At ITV he practically became the sole flak-catcher for an entire channel.

The Edinburgh TV festival is the obvious example. The man actually seemed to derive a sort of pleasure from being the first executive to fend off a constant grumble of industry complaints for one G&T-stained week in Scotland year after year. "In fact I'm guilty of turning Edinburgh into an establishment occasion, and that's something I very much regret."

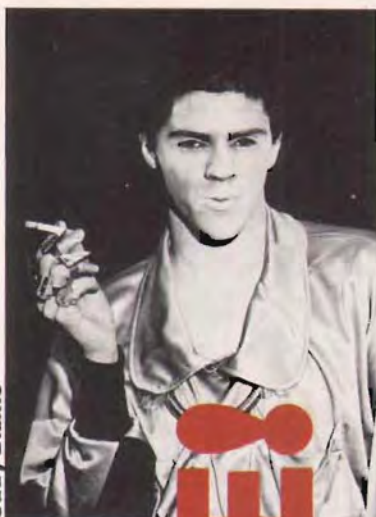
"I first went up because I wanted to hear what people were saying, and they influenced me considerably in terms of programme

judgements. Also it opened my eyes to a lot of the social agenda that I was unaware of. Being the only one in the lion's den I would get clawed to death by everybody, but I defended my position as robustly as I could. But for a couple of years running, Edinburgh got a little bit lost and was overtaken by sociologists and academics. I got up and made a very impassioned speech saying that a lot of very important programme makers hadn't managed to get to their feet once during the festival because nobody was talking about programmes. The result of that was that the registration fee for the following year was increased enormously in an attempt to discourage the academics, and that meant that only the TV establishment could afford to go."

Undoubtedly Grade has his priorities right; programmes, and their makers, are paramount. America has lost sight of that for good, he feels. He's joined the BBC to ensure that it won't go the same way.

Yes, but seriously Michael, don't you wish you didn't have to work quite so many hours? Don't you wish you had more time at home with your kids?

"More time at home? I'd probably only end up watching TV..." ●



*take the BLAME!

● Judy Blame . . . Judy Blame. That's all you ever hear in our house. Judy this. Judy that. It's one thing sharing your life with another person, but something else again sharing your home with a fan of Judy Blame's over-sized jewellery.

"Bought another necklace today."

"Where are you going to put it?"

"Around my neck, dummy!"

"And then?"

"It can live in the spare bedroom."

Judy Blame's jewellery is *BIG*, but then so is its creator. Larger than life as they say . . .

How did you become Judy Blame?

"When I worked as a coatcheck boy in a nightclub I met Antony Price, and he nicknamed me Judy . . . then I thought of Blame, and it just sounded like some trashy B-movie actress . . . so it stuck . . . I'm using it as a brand name." So it's a product?

"Yeah, but it does get a bit confusing at times . . ."

So what should I call you? Chris or Judy?

"Most people call me Judy Blame . . . both together . . . Antony still calls me Judy, or Miss Blame." Do you class yourself as a jewellery designer?

"That's how I pinpoint what I do, but there are lots of spin-offs from it . . ."

Are there any restrictions on what you would deem a piece of jewellery?

"The more I've done it, the more the things have become garments as opposed to being just pieces of jewellery . . . I'm just pushing jewellery design a bit further than most people do."

Are people overpowered by it?

"Yeah, most people; but it *is* different."

How did you begin to use 'found objects' in your pieces?

"Money! I stole the takings from 'Cha-Cha' (a nightclub he ran with model, Scarlett) and never went back, I thought, 'What the hell am I going to do?' . . . So I showed Antony my ideas in a tiny little book of polaroids I always carried . . . He was really pissing himself laughing between every picture, and I was getting more and more wound up, and then he closed the book and said, 'One day when I do a show, Judy, you can do the jewellery.' . . . but it didn't happen for twelve months. . . Shall we look at your press cuttings?"

(Opens book) "Oh . . . Tatler . . . How did that happen?"

"I'm a very social person . . . I like to meet people. You know, the 'phone goes and they just ask if I've got anything . . . it's always worth following up leads because you never know what will happen . . . I'm a great believer in fate! I wish I'd had one of those Hollywood mothers who *PUSH* their children . . . (turns page) Oooh, look! Antony Price . . . He's someone whose work I've followed . . . people like Roxy Music . . . On the first show we did I just turned up and looked at the frocks and he told me which spaces I had to fill . . . it wasn't fashion, it was showtime! (turns page) Oh, this is my first bit of publicity, 'Judy's Jewels' . . . God, look at the prices!" How often is your jewellery



presented the way you see it? Say if the *Sunday Times* does it?

"I actually liked the pictures they did . . . normally they don't use enough . . . I know some pieces are heavy and cumbersome, but you *should* just pile it on. . . How did New York react to Judy Blame?

"They really looked after me . . . it was ridiculous, I was staying there and staying there . . . it's so fast you can get so much more done." Is it different to the reaction you get in London?

"I believe the reaction I got in London . . . If someone doesn't like it they'll tell you . . . in America turning yourself into your image is part of their lifestyle, so every time I went out it went with me . . . ▶

They are all party people, so you never really meet anyone, it's all done on a kissing-on-the-cheek level. I can do that till the cows come home ... (turns page) This is Judy Blame in his rubbish dump ... my studio ... Good haircut!

"That was really funny because this Japanese magazine asked me to pose with my head shaved, so someone did this huge prick and balls across my head ... I arrived at the session wearing a hat, and when I took it off they were just like (fakes mouth agog) ... I mean, they shouldn't have asked me in the first place ..."

Did they do the portrait?

"They said it was 'too strong' ... The times I've heard those two words strung together by the media."

Is that a problem?

"I think it's worked to my advantage ... I never went to college so I've built up through experimentation ... struggling away at it was my way of working it out, like going to college ... no grant, mind you! Now I'm ready to do whatever people want ... on my own terms. You know, people think I'm pissy and stand off-ish ... I'm not at all, but because my stuff was not readily available, people had to come to me ..."

(turns page) Oh look, Boy George at the Grammy's ... He just said, 'send over all your gold stuff,' and I thought, 'Oh, he'll choose a necklace', and he just put it all on ... I thought I was over the top ... Standing next to Joan Rivers it works really well ...

"Next to Joan Rivers it just looks fabulous."

On the subject of George, do you believe that those who hang on in there will come through so long as they believe in themselves enough?

"Yeah, you have to believe in what you do. I did ... I was on my own believing in it for a lo-n-g time ... It's very much about me. I do care what people think, but I don't let my ideas be dominated by anyone ..."

So what's next for Judy Blame?

"I'm doing New York with Suzanne Bartsch, and it's the first time I'm really attacking summer ... Japan has been a great ambition of mine because I love what they do ... so to go to Tokyo will be a great treat ..."

And personally?

"I'm doing a lot of Rock'n'Roll work, and obviously you're talking to a different business there, so you clash with them a lot of the time ... but I'd like to do something like TV ... like Doctor Who ..."

Do you still get elated when you see someone wearing your jewellery?

"I'm always suprised when someone does!"

What's your ultimate ambition, Judy?

"To have a Judy Blame ice cream company. 402 flavours. That's my ultimate passion in life, and that's why I have to go around the world—to investigate all the ice creams ..."

□ IAIN R. WEBB



Photographs by Monica Curtin • Styling by Iain R. Webb • Hair and make-up by Jalle Bakke • Modelled by Scarlett.

All jewellery by Judy Blame (contact 01-739 3988). Fabrics by Penny Beard; Black ruched dress by Laurence; Long black raffia gloves by Bernstock-Speirs; Coat by Sue Clowes.

Lloyd Cole and the Commotions.



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SHEFFIELD: TEL. 751445. SOUTHAMPTON: TEL. 32654. STOCKTON: TEL. 676174. SUNDERLAND: TEL. 41267. SUTTON: TEL. 642 0084. SWANSEA: TEL. 462094. WOLVERHAMPTON: TEL. 29978.

● N E ● ● F

I N T E R V I E W B Y D A V E M C C U L L O U G H



SURELY AT the outset the weakest thing about Lenny Henry is his name. It just seems to ooze that modern kind of boredom that comes with the present media glut of 'bright young faces' who day and night adorn our screens, our radios and our press with their new books, new plays, new underwear, new anything. The world of Breakfast TV and radio phone-ins, wherein the apparent point of all this activity—to inform—is turned completely on its head, becoming merely an excuse for a spot of self-promotion.

Amid this exaltation of the average, Lenny Henry might seem par for the course. Perhaps that's unfair, but the news that he'd signed to Chrysalis Records and was about to bring out singles and an LP was stultifying in its lack of anything approaching interest. Only the thought that he was CLOGGING UP an already too-well-clogged area of activity provoked any reaction at all in this breast, as it moved towards Blackpool to meet and interview Lenny Henry, listening on the way to his new single and thinking how predictably awful it was (Lenny does a Barron Knights send-up of modern chart hits).

Lenny was in Summer Season on Blackpool Pier. He didn't want BLITZ to see the show. Surprise surprise . . .

ARE YOU enjoying Blackpool?

"No."

Why not?

"I stopped doing Summer Seasons about three years ago. I think I'll stop it again after this. Like, we've been here since *May* . . . ! Twenty weeks of shows; two shows, six times a week. It gets a bit like comedy community service for all the old people of Blackpool. Not that there's anything wrong with that, and it's good the prices have been reduced for them, but it's just that I'm not a Summer Season person anymore. It's not doing anything for comedy . . ."

That's a strange thing to say for someone who is seen as a fairly established figure in comedy . . .

"It's not like I'm Mr Showbiz, you know—'hey, let's do some darkie comedy you guys!' I'm not like that at all, and the TV show hasn't been exactly your legit BBC half-hour comedy series . . ."

Flash back: *The Lenny Henry Show*, as it was so originally called, was in fact a bit of a surprise. Not world-shattering, but it did

A • K I N D

P H O T O G R A P H B Y M A R K C O L L I C O T T

include some nifty moments, especially those featuring the Comic Strip people. It was a nudge in the right direction and meeting Lenny Henry confirmed the point. He is an occasionally impassioned bear of a man who seems honest about what he does and who endeavours to make comedy something more than, as he puts it, "laughing at girls' tits". His record will probably still be dreadful but then, tee hee, what records *aren't* these days?

"I'm glad you were surprised by the TV show because people always expect a certain type of thing. The media tells them I'm the gobstopper-eyed, swivel-eyed Black Comedian. It's like they're trying to find any adjective but 'funny' sometimes . . ."

Do you prefer mainstream rather than, say, late night Channel Four?

"I don't know, really. I've got sucked into it, I hadn't a choice. After the anarchic mess of *Tiswas* we wanted to do *Three Of A Kind*, which is pretty sedate—"boys you've really got to calm down and wear some decent clothes". My own show was another departure . . ."

Did you mind the respectable aura of *Three Of A Kind*?

"I thought it was quite nifty at times. You had time to rehearse, unlike *OTT*! That was like literally soiling your underwear every night. That feeling that you're doing a programme live and you're not really sure what's going on is the best feeling ever, though. I remember one night I was supposed to be on doing Trevor McDonut and I forgot . . . I was running down the corridor whipping out these glasses and a false moustache! On the other hand I like getting things right, which is the more recent shows. It's dead boring but necessary."

AS WE'VE said, Lenny Henry's entry into rock 'n' roll is hardly the all-important shot in the arm the genre is gasping for. But he does feel passionate about his upcoming recordings, seeing a parallel between his own mixture of funk backing and funny voiceovers and some reggae toasters. He may be flattering himself but he means it.

"It's like I started out in rock 'n' roll anyway. I used to get up in discos all over the Midlands doing Elvis impersonations. Finally a DJ said I ought to do *New Faces*. I won it twice and I was on my way . . . And then, early on in London, while I was learning my comedy, I spent half the time as well down Gulliver's listening to *Body Heat* by James Brown and thinking, Jeesus! this is brilliant . . ."

Do you see a direct link between modern

rock 'n' roll and modern comedy?

"There's a true saying that every rock 'n' roll star wants to be a comedian and vice versa. How else could we have got all those pop stars on *Tiswas* throwing buckets of water over people in a cage and loving it? I mean, people like Costello or Phil Collins are fairly *reserved* normally . . ."

He describes his musical attempts as "having a go"; his expertise on black soul music is undoubted, the interview being peppered with various musical references—I just wish he'd stuck to his forte, comedy, and that Chrysalis had signed James Brown or somebody else instead.

What's your relationship with the *Comic Strip* crowd?

Their director was our director on *Three Of A Kind*. So we were continually seeing each other. Then I did *OTT* with Alexei, so we got intertwined—now I've married Dawn French so (*garbled David Bellamy voice*) we're even more (*he knots his hands wildly*) . . . ! We're all chums.

"I don't like the other kind: people who lean on microphones and tell racist, sexist jokes, never have done. Comedians with big bow ties and Fourth Division footballer hair-cuts and flares. It's just horrible. If you saw a photograph of me when I started I *did* have a big bow tie and flares, but it was only because I wasn't sorted out . . . I mean, I was dressing like a forty year-old man to appeal to this audience. Twenty-two years old! I should have got stick-on side burns to match . . ."

How difficult is it steering your middle course?

"Obviously you get pressure from people who'd like to see you walk down the steps at the beginning, have A Guest, then sit down with your Guest on stools and sing to one another—then THE SKETCH. They wanted me to do that, I'm sure they did."

"With *The Lenny Henry Show* I wanted to do six different plays that would take up each episode but they said, 'actually we'd prefer a format'. That's why even now the sketches are longer than normal sketch routines. There are things I'm not pleased with but there are other things I know only I could have done."

"I want to keep ramming it down throats that I'm not your standard idea of the black comedian—velvet ties and rolling eyes. This sounds really wanky, but I'm not really a political animal, it's more of a body politic with me. I don't want to hit people over the head but I do want them to know I won't do any racist or sexist jokes but I *do* joke about sex and I *am* still funny a lot of the time . . ."

Who changed your ideas on comedy?

"Various people. Listening to Pryor; Bill Cosby first, though he was a bit bland. Then I heard 'That Nigger's Gone Crazy' in Tapes

Galore on the Edgware Road. I was horrified, I just stood there in the middle of the shop—'Nigger'? Somebody saying *nigger*, you know? I fell off my chair, it was brilliant. A black person doing white peoples' voices, total freak-out. It was state of the art and it changed me a great deal."

"Watching Bobby Ball too was important, his body and face comedy. And then seeing Alexei work for the first time down *The Comic Strip*—he singed my eyebrows, phew! It took a while: there was still the odd temptation to joke about girls with mini-skirts on . . ."

You said 'not doing sexist humour': that sounds unnatural somehow, like you have to catch yourself now and again.

"You've got to really think about it. You're walking a thin line all the time, there's times you fall into things . . . I must say, I went to see A Very Famous Comedian, I won't name who, in Windsor. There were two black people and me in the place, I was right at the back. I thought, 'well this guy is either going to entertain everybody or he's going to say something . . .'. It was five minutes into the opening and he said, 'oh, I see we've got some teeth sitting in the audience tonight, some of our *coloured community* are here, I'd better not say anything or they'll come up on to the stage with spears.' Dynamite, eh?"

"We're people from the jungle still to a lot of our top comedians. We're still living in the Forties; black people can't read, they talk funny, they can't have Scottish accents or any other kind of accent . . ."

"I went on *Tiswas* once with a grass skirt and warrior make-up and I thought I was pushing back the boundaries of comedy. What I found I was actually doing was confirming people's ignorance about black people. It's very difficult . . ."

Have you any personal standards, as Alexei does, about advertising products on the media?

"Depends what it is. I do one, but I think it has an air of originality about it—the joke is funny and it actually involves me doing something, as opposed to saying, 'buy this: it's really good!' You don't look convinced. I detect an air of cynicism . . . !"

I protest, Lenny Henry gets slightly paranoid. Clearly he was psyched up for this interview—got to prove himself. He shouldn't have to. It's just the media morass makes it hard to dig out some one with a bit of soul in him. Even if he makes awful records . . .

"I knew I'd be seen as a bit of a running dog in some quarters. An establishment figure. I get it all the time—I'm doing me best, honest! Let me get on with it, you know? Who cares? . . ."

Lenny Henry might, and that's why he might be different than the rest. ●

THEIR SLEEVES TWO ART

■ Interviews by Marc Issue

■ Photographs by Tony Barratt

RECORD SLEEVE design is basically the same as any other design discipline in the sense that it requires an arrangement of illustration, information and space. It is peculiar as a discipline because:

It is intimately connected with the fashion industry.

Its products are (pretty much) permanent household items: the sleeve will beam up at you possibly for longer than you will be inclined to play the record.

The sleeve will have a great part in how you assess the music—imagine that all records were issued with plain white sleeves, with a little typewritten sticker saying who it was! How different would your approach to the music be?

Imagine buying perfume in a little jam jar marked 'Perfume'...

Here are five record sleeve designers. Assorted...



Bush Telegraph 12"

★ There was an extraordinary debate about what previously unseen XL design work should be unveiled in this piece. "How about showing them the Frankie stuff that never got used? Heh! Heh! All the pornographic stuff? ... Better not, that would piss Jill Sinclair (*Zang Tumb Tuum*) off no end, we'd never work again!" Anyway, what did I want to ask them about?

XL have been doing all sorts of things for a very long time. They've brought together histories of interior design, magazines and books, packaging, and they're now designing record covers and associated material. They started out doing sleeves for Mark Dean's Innervision label, and it so happened that they were overhauling the interior of SARM

studios when ZTT, whose offices are at SARM, needed a logo doing for their new label. So they 'threw in' the logo design with the rest, as it were. Visitors to the studios will note that the very same speckled ground of the walls there is used

as the background of the earliest ZTT press displays, including the 'Radiant Obstacle in the Path of the Obvious' ad on the back of BLITZ No. 15. The man who does the layouts of Yer Frankie Records is called Dave Smart, who reckons

that Paul Morley is a pleasure to work with. "He knows what he wants, his ideas are always well thought through, and the more that gets done, the *more* he knows what he wants." So there you are. Was the 'Bang' announcement on the back of the issue before last a real Picasso or not?

"That's a trade secret. But all will be revealed. It's not a real Picasso ... at the moment."

But it might be at some later date?

He smiles. He has a pleasant smile.

Dave says that yes, of course they listen to the music and the designs reflect the music, and the lyrics. Royston says he's more cynical about that sort of thing—that if you like the music and enjoy designing a cover for it, it will not necessarily be apparent in the finished design, but if you don't like a particular record, you can still come up with an interesting and appropriate sleeve design for it.

XL like to put together graphic identities that will cross over into press ads, T-shirts and whatever, and they like to know that the record company is going to put their full weight behind a record they work on. In common with all the other designers interviewed, they felt that Soul and Reggae records have room for a *lot* of improvements ... XL? Doesn't that stand for ...? ●



XL



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Unused design for Spelt Like This



Art of Noise LP



Floy Joy's Into The Hot LP

★ Breakfast in South Putney. At least that's where Chris Morton—better known as **C. More Tone**—said it was over the 'phone. The suburban semi that serves as his home and workplace is tucked between Wimbledon Common and the bottom end of Richmond Park, hardly the design powerhouse you might expect of one of the busiest freelance designers of sleeves.

Chris worked for Stiff from its beginning until 1982—six years, turning out some of the wittiest packaging since... well, a long time ago. He left Stiff to go freelance when he felt they had become more or less like a normal record company, although he still has a good relationship with his former employers.

Chris did a lot of animation at college, but never made it to the end of the course—they decided that Dada influences were not to be countenanced in a commercial graphic designer, and he tucked his portfolio under his arm a few months before graduating. Then he met Jake Riviera at the point where Stiff was being launched into the world. This sort of thing happens all the time.

"I love an excuse to paint—there are a few painters who I've never really got over how wonderful their work was. Braque, Matisse, Schwitters, I'm really happy when

I can paint a sleeve."

His singles bags for Working Week are painted, and specifically the work that convinced me he was a man to talk to. Does it matter whether he likes the music that he's wrapping up?

"It shouldn't do, but it does. Most people still want a photo of the band or whatever on the front, and you'll get a brief to basically tart up the photo and make the band look contemporary, and that's a pretty narrow limitation. If I get onto a job early enough I get to art direct the photo session, and that helps, but it's no good

getting frustrated with the limitations, 'cos I know I have to live with them, and I couldn't really make a living selling actual paintings—and I'd probably get bored without having deadlines to keep. I'd like to get into the area of videos and all the rest of it, but I don't have the spare time, although I suppose I could *make* the time if I was going to make the effort to move into those areas... I don't suppose it takes much more time to design a video than it does to design a record cover once you've got the hang of it..."

Are there any kinds of music that

are particularly badly served by design?

"All areas need a shot in the arm—I got interested in sleeve design in the first place because I knew I could do better than what was going around at the time. I'll always do reggae covers because they're pretty badly done much of the time, but most bad sleeve design comes down to record companies not being prepared to fork out the little extra. The best situation for me is when the record company takes a back seat, I dream up what I'd really like to do, and it's printable, and the band

★ Vaughan Oliver and Nigel Grierson are **23 Envelope**. They are the house designers at 4AD records, home of The Cocteau Twins, This Mortal Coil, Xmal Deutschland and... and...

They went to school together. They got involved in 4AD when it was starting. They are well aware that they have a well-developed visual identity, and realise that clients approaching them to do work outside their foster home will know what to expect from them. They feel that it is very important to have a certain empathy with the bands that they design covers for. They frequently hear a song developing right through from the first demos to the end result, and they will be extremely familiar with the music before setting pen to paper. Vaughan concentrates on the design aspects of the work while Nigel does the photography, but they both decide on the concept and finish the work together.

They wonder at designers who knock off three singles bags in an afternoon, they wonder why they do it. They say the work in a bit of a closet, and did I think that many

people were aware of their work? Yes, quite a few, I think. Their work with the Cocteau Twins has been particularly successful at doing to the eyes exactly what the music does to the ears. The Cocteau(!) will bring them a brief which describes mood rather than precise visual suggestions. For *Pearly Dewdrops*, for example, they wanted to evoke the feeling of being cosy indoors on a cold November evening. More will be suggested in the design than will be actually depicted. In that sense they are part of an abstract school of sleeve design, if designers can be categorised in that way. Their influences are more cinematic and literary than graphic. They admire Tarkovsky and Kafka. I suggest to them that they might move into design for video, orchestrating lights and sets. They say they are more interested in scripting and directing, possibly being involved in some way in the recording of the music. Which removes them from the realms of promotional video altogether. They feel that promotional video is too haphazard an arrangement of images around the existing sound,



Design for Xmal Deutschland's Tocsin album



A projected sleeve design for Alex Chilton's *Can't Seem To Make You Mine*.



Vicious Pink 12

★**Shoot That Tiger!** are everywhere. The boss man, Dave Richardson, tells me they never turn a job down because it might not be fashionable, or won't push out the boundaries of state-of-the-art-ness, because even people who like MOR music are entitled to have well-designed record sleeves. "Last year we did a series of Ronco compilations. Real trash marketing, we came up with the concept and helped out with the TV adverts. *Some* designers would throw you out of the window if you even suggested they should do that kind of work, but we're not putting it down—people who buy their compilation LP's at Woolies have a right to be marketed to just the same as the trendies in their Gucci suits. So we had eighteen months when every record we designed for them went gold, and that's the kind of design that we like best! Design that works!"

The **Shoot That Tiger!** people—there are ten designers working there at the moment—aren't particularly well up on music fashions. They don't go to the parties, and they don't like design magazines. Richardson says he's interested in the client, the record company, the band, the public who buy the records and that's all; he has no time for the design fraternity's mutual backslapping and/or bitching. He started out in toy design but found that more and more products would be developed and he'd get the money but they simply never appeared. The patents were being bought up and sat on, to prevent the competition from using the ideas. A few music jobs came along, and he decided to give it a whirl—"It's just the same as any other form of design, you're dealing with illustration, typeface and space. It's glamorous because it's tied up with the fashion industry, and video and all that, and we choose to make a living out of it, but you've got to keep it in perspective—it's not a cure for cancer, is it?" Dave Richardson laughs. Deflating the aura that surrounds what he does gives him obvious satisfaction.

"All ten of us keep working on all sorts of different jobs in different styles all the time. We don't have any particular house style. A couple of years ago, for instance, we did some neon things, and suddenly everyone wanted neon designs. It got very boring. Right now we're working on a whole new design for a Dutch magazine, which is the first job of



Shoot That Tiger!

likes it, I can do anything I like. There's no reason why it should be all flat graphics, either—the Floy Joy LP cover I've just done is a lot of boxes with funny little toys in them, and the cover is just a photograph of that—I had a great time going looking for the bits and pieces..."

ART

but they will be involved in the forthcoming Cocteau Twins film project.

23 Envelope say they have all the artistic freedom they need working at 4AD, and being on the premises they build up good relationships with the people they design for. They would only go outside looking for work if they wanted more money. They don't want to sell out their way of looking at things. Nigel says that 23 Envelope sleeves wouldn't look right on Madness records. I have to agree. ●



Modern English LP

BLITZ

its kind that we've done. We might fall flat on our faces with it, and if we do then that's us out of that particular game, but we'll still have an aggressive approach to it—we won't be taking them fifteen ideas and being grateful that they pick one. We'll take them two good presentations and they can decide from that..."

Shoot that Tiger are prolific. "I don't believe in the idea of someone who will do one LP cover a year and he's a genius. If you've got a talent you should flog it to death, really take it to its limits. Do everything..." ●



Pointer Sisters' 'Jump' 12"



American sleeve for the Illustrated Man LP



Power Corruption & Lies

★ The atmosphere in the studios at Peter Saville Associates is placid, and everything is spotlessly clean. I suppose it's like that all the time; it was when I was there, and I don't think they would have tidied up such an enormous area just for me! There was music playing, but it was turned so low that I could tell it wasn't the Cramps, but I couldn't tell you much else about it. The place is sparsely furnished in the Saville style—matt black cupboards with metal grille facing, neutral grey plan chest, high-tech drawing boards. We sat either side of an enormous white desk top stood on polished wooden trestles. All good stuff.

Peter Saville doesn't do nearly so many record sleeves as he used to—he says he's been deliberately avoiding record work for the past eighteen months in order to concentrate on other areas, but his current list is still impressive. He does the New Order sleeves, Orchestral Manoeuvres, Bryan Ferry and Wham. How does one go about designing a record sleeve for New Order?

"I see them very occasionally now, because they're based in Manchester and I'm in London, but when they've got something for me to do they'll simply call up and say, the single's coming out, or, the album's nearly finished. And I'll say, can I hear it, and they'll say, not yet, and I might ask them what it's called, and they'll say they don't know yet. So I'm left completely without a specific brief, which makes the job very interesting, because I'll have to come up with pure design, and then bring a title to it afterwards. They're unusual people to work for, they like that sort of thing.

Is that why there was no title printed on the cover of the *Power, Corruption and Lies* LP?

"No, they'd told me the title of that one. I'd been working on some ideas about printing presses for that cover, but we felt that it would be interpreted as being about the Press, so I found the painting, which went well with the title, but it didn't seem necessary to actually put the title across the top of the painting, so we left it off." Simple as that!

How is the move into "other areas" going?

"It's difficult. I thought at one time that if your work was known, people would eventually call you up and ask you to do other things for them, like package design, or advertising campaigns, but they don't—other industries have their own hierarchies, they have their



Peter Saville

14:08:84

PLAY
AT
HOME

THE ASSOCIATES AT PETER SAVILLE
LIMITED EDITION

AUGUST	14 BELONGING
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	28 UNUSUAL
SEPTEMBER	04 RETURNED AND THE WANDERERS
	11 ANGELIC SUPREMACY
	18 THE SPECIAL ART
	25 CROWD AND THE RUNNERS
OCTOBER	02 GIRLSCHOOL
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A LIMITED EDITION OF 1000 COPIES OF THE PLAY AT HOME POSTER. THE POSTER IS PRINTED ON A SPECIAL PAPER AND IS AVAILABLE IN A LIMITED EDITION OF 1000 COPIES. THE POSTER IS AVAILABLE IN A LIMITED EDITION OF 1000 COPIES.

ART

93

SHIFTS

A limited edition poster for Channel Four's Play At Home series.

own regular designers, and they have their own particular requirements that you have to be familiar with. You can get into other areas, but it's an uphill struggle. Lately we've done some advertising, a lot of corporate identity—we're stirring up some interest in design for art galleries, we've designed a new look for an Edinburgh gallery called the Fruit Market, and we're doing one for the Whitechapel Gallery. But we're testing the water in all the areas we can, and maybe one or two of them will pick up."

So—out into the unknown. Again. ●

ART



Confusion 12"

Programmes scheduled for screening in the 1984/85 season of The South Bank Show include:

ALAN BENNETT

a self-portrait of his background and his work from Beyond the Fringe to An Englishman Abroad and his first feature film, Private Functions

JOSEPH HELLER

the author of Catch 22 and Something Happened: filmed in New York, looking at the city in which he grew up and talking about his latest novel, God Knows

MSTISLAV ROSTROPOVICH

the first full-length film profile of the great Russian cellist: in concert, conducting the London Philharmonia and accompanying his wife, the singer Galina Vishnevskaya, at his own festival at Aldeburgh

PAUL McCARTNEY

working again with George Martin, who produced 17 Beatle hits, re-recording and, for the first time in public, singing some of his finest songs as he works on his new film, Give My Regards To Broadstreet

ANTHONY BURGESS
ON DH LAWRENCE

a specially commissioned television essay filmed in Nottingham and Cornwall, to mark the 100th anniversary of Lawrence's birth

IAN McKELLEN

documenting a year in the life of one of Britain's most distinguished actors, with extracts from plays, diaries and his work during his first year with the National Theatre Company

NORMAN NICHOLSON

a film by John Read shot in Cumbria, of one of Britain's finest poets

CHAGALL

a study of the work of one of the world's greatest living painters

PHOENIX DANCE

a film of an extraordinary new young British dance company from Leeds

MAX WALL

a unique film about the affinity between this great music hall actor and the plays of Samuel Beckett

ALAN BLEASDALE

the author of Boys From The Blackstuff and Scully, filmed in Liverpool at work on his latest project, a musical play about Elvis Presley

OLIVIER MESSIAEN

a profile of one of the world's most celebrated and elusive living composers, including performances from his work, filmed in Paris and the studio

EDITED AND PRESENTED BY MELVYN BRAGG
EVERY SUNDAY ON ITV
IN A LIVING ROOM NEAR YOU

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LONDON WEEKEND TELEVISION

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~edited *by iain r. Webb*



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Down and in!

Photographs by David Hiscock
Modelled by Julia, Cerith Wyn Evans



★ Navy jacket with black velvet collar and cuffs, navy pin-stripe trousers, both from Comme Des Garçons.
● Silver-grey tapestry jacket by Culture Shock.

▲ Double-breasted raglan sleeved wool suits by John Bellwood, from £170.

Comme Des Garçons and Culture Shock from Browns, South Molton Street, London W1, John Bellwood from Issue Clothing, Walkers, Long Acre, London WC2.

Inspired by Down and Out: Orwell's Paris and London Revisited, by Sandy Craig and Cris Schwarz, published by Penguin Books.

EMI

TELEGRAPH

***TURN
THOSE
GUNS
AROUND***

A new single, a new sound
on 7" and 12"

'Don't you know your only option is to dance?'



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Photograph by Gill Campbell
● Modelled by Luke.

Watches (from bottom to top): — Porsche Design, £530 (steal one!), from Harvey Nicholls; Breit Chronograph, £380, from Paul Smith; Breit Pareo, £58, from Joseph Pour La Maison; Lorenz, £175, from Paul Smith; Ferrari, £320, from Harvey Nicholls; Yves St. Laurent, £175, from Harvey Nicholls; Breit Black and White, £94, from Joseph Pour La Maison; Swatch Quartz, £17.95, from Joseph Pour La Maison.

Cashmere 'Chittleborough-Morgan' coat from Nutters; Striped Silk Shirt, £42, from Joseph Pour La Maison; Hand-painted paisley tie, £2.00, from Portobello Market — gold and silver gouache paints, £1.16 each.

Stockists: Paul Smith, Floral Street, London WC2; Harvey Nicholls, Knightsbridge, SW1; Joseph Pour La Maison, Sloane Street, SW1; Nutters, Savile Row, W1.

Don't wanna buy a watch?

What becomes a legend now?



Photograph by Peter Brown
• Make-up by Debbie Bunn
for Beauty Without Cruelty •
Hair by Gianni at 62 Duke
St., W1. • Modelled by Missy
at K-Z.

All make-up used by **Beauty
Without Cruelty** (price-list
and catalogue from Beauty
Without Cruelty, Avebury
Avenue, Tonbridge, Kent
TN9 1TL, or from B.W.C.
shop at 16 Chiltern Street,
London W1). Jewellery by
Monty Don, from Harvey
Nicholls, Knightsbridge,
London SW1.

"... AND YOU CAN forget all that dreamy, dewy-eyed copy you've been submitting lately, just give me a piece of social realism on Kim Wilde." I could see The Editor was in no mood for compromise. I meekly complied and went through the imaginary cap-doffing routine all too familiar to us Blitz freelances.

Social realism and Kim Wilde... I desperately sought an angle, but as things turned out, I needn't have worried.

The Cast

Miss Kim Wilde

—a pop star, seemingly in control, quietly self-pleased, looking to re-establish herself after a short lay-off, distant.

Monica Curtin

—a photographer, thorough, affable, but a strong self-will, is about to have her phone cut off any day now.

Robert

—a hairdresser, on the surface a bit of a dandy, soft spoken, not afraid to give advice, the audience never gets to know him well, enigmatic.

Maggie

—a make-up artist, a New Yorker trying out London for a couple of years, interested, polite.

Sheila Sedgwick

—a record company press officer, overt, organised, carefully bides her time, big stakes in client protection.

Simon Potter

—a journalist, squeaky-clean, cub reporter fixation, an air of mild good humour, eager to please, worries about what people think of him.



Ladies and Gentlemen, we proudly present:

TIME IS TIGHT

or I was Kim Wilde's stand-in

■ Interview by Simon Potter
■ Photograph by Monica Curtin

The role players take the stage, a photographic studio in London's busy West End. Those assembled seem mildly panicked over Simon Potter's entrance.

Simon (trying to appear relaxed): Hi, I'm Simon Potter from Blitz magazine.

Sheila: Hi, Simon. We've been expecting you. I'm afraid we're running well behind schedule. Kim's just changing for the photo session, but we'll be able to give you a few minutes for the interview somewhere along the line.

Clearly unimpressed by the time allotted to him, Simon takes a seat and accepts Monica's offer of a coffee. He chats casually to Sheila and Robert while Maggie attends to Kim's make-up in a separate room and Monica erects the photographic equipment.

Monica: Simon, to save time, would you mind standing in for Kim while I take a few polaroids in preparation for the main shots.

Simon: But I look nothing like Kim.

Monica: Doesn't matter. I only want to position the lighting.

Simon dutifully walks over to the door around which the session will take place. Cheers of encouragement abound from Sheila and Robert who advise Simon to strike his best James Dean pose.

Monica: Right, look into the light would you, Simon?

Simon: It's awfully bright, Monica.

Monica: That's alright, you'll get used to it.

A few minutes later Simon stumbles to his seat, struggling to regain his vision. He takes somebody else's coffee in mistake for his.

Sheila: Kim seems to be ready now. Why don't you pop next door, Simon, and chat for a few minutes while Monica finishes setting up.

Simon enters a box room which is a jumble of Miss Wilde's clothes and various make-up applications. The pop singer is wearing a tight leather dress, which brings to mind dubious S&M images.

Kim (for it is she): I bought this new dress before my new look was even discussed. I spoke to XL and had this dress specially designed because I'm into those pictures of Batwoman and Barbarella. I love that sort of thing.

Simon: Don't you ever feel embarrassed by this new pose?

Kim: Well I know it's a sexy image, but it's a different kind of sexiness to that displayed by page three girls in suspenders with their tits hanging out. I think it's much more exciting to portray a woman in control of herself than being told what to do at the hands of some lecherous photographer.

Simon: Does the assimilation of such a role come easily or do you have to work at it?

Kim: Work at what?

Simon: Exuding sex appeal.

Kim: I don't think about it at all, I just enjoy it. It's not my fault that I've got big lips, that I like wearing red lipstick and have blonde hair.

Miss Wilde rolls her tongue round her lip gloss, sensuously.

Simon: But you deliberately highlight those features.

Kim: What woman wouldn't? Anyway, people only really take notice because I'm a famous person.

Simon: But how would you react if ...

A third person enters the room. It's Sheila.

Sheila: OK, Kim, back to the other room.

Simon: When can I ask her some more questions?

Sheila: Once the photo session gets underway ...

The room is filled with the sound of camera clicks, and Monica's detailed directives to Miss Wilde. Miss Wilde for her part leans against the door, her leather dress creasing in the places it's supposed to.

Monica: Angle more to the door, Kim. Put your shoulder back. Extend your back foot. That's perfect.

Kim: Monica, do you mind if I spend a couple of minutes on my hair?

Monica: Not at all.

Miss Wilde and Robert disappear into the box room.

Monica: Simon, I hate to ask you again, but would you mind posing in Kim's place for another polaroid. It won't take long.

Two minutes pass.

Simon: Oh, look into the light! I thought you said turn to the right. Sorry, Monica!

Miss Wilde re-enters satisfied with Robert's efforts.

Monica: Take over from Simon now, Kim. Robert, can you help Simon to a chair; the lights have blinded him again.

Simon (stumbling): Robert, Robert? Is that you?

Robert: I'm over here. It's alright.

Miss Wilde starts humming her new single 'The Second Time' while Monica takes the final shots. Sheila makes polite conversation with Simon until, suddenly ...

Sheila: Oh, look! The session's over. Grab a quick five minutes with Kim, Simon, while the car's waiting.

Miss Wilde and Simon resume their conversation in the box room.

Simon: Where were we?

Kim: You were going on about the sex image. This is obviously a sexy picture (looking down at the polaroid), and I hope you understand the thinking behind it.

Simon: Do you enjoy being a pop star, Kim?

Kim: Yeah, I like the attention more than I'd care to admit. It also means that I'm not tied to a routine, I'd hate that. I like the way that being in pop music can be unfair, yet terribly fair at the same time.

Simon: How do you mean?

Kim: Well, you can't always see the people you want, that's unfair. If I don't have a hit record, that's unfair. If the press give me a hard time, it's unfair ... And it's fair because it gives me a good life.

Simon: Is it difficult to maintain friendships when you're a pop star?

Kim: Well, it is difficult to fit everybody in. Everyone wants me, you know. Rick and Dad want me at the studio (her father and brother co-write and produce her material, but you knew that already), friends want me, the record company wants me and (jokingly) my public want me.

Simon: Are any of your friends jealous of your success?

Kim: Not close friends. That's something I don't wish to think about. One friend has said that she envies me to my face, but what they say about me behind my back I don't get to hear of. There must be a lot of them because I keep hearing them talking behind other people's backs.

Simon: Do you do that?

Kim: No, it's uncool.

Simon: So if you hate someone you'll tell them to their face will you?

Kim: Let's put it this way, I won't tell anyone else before I let that person know about it.

Simon: Can you see yourself being a pop star for a long time?

Kim (looking into the mirror): You know, I'm really pleased with my hair. It hasn't changed much, just got longer. Over the past year I've started to look after myself, and now I want to be well dressed and well groomed the whole time.

Simon: What, even when you go down the shops?

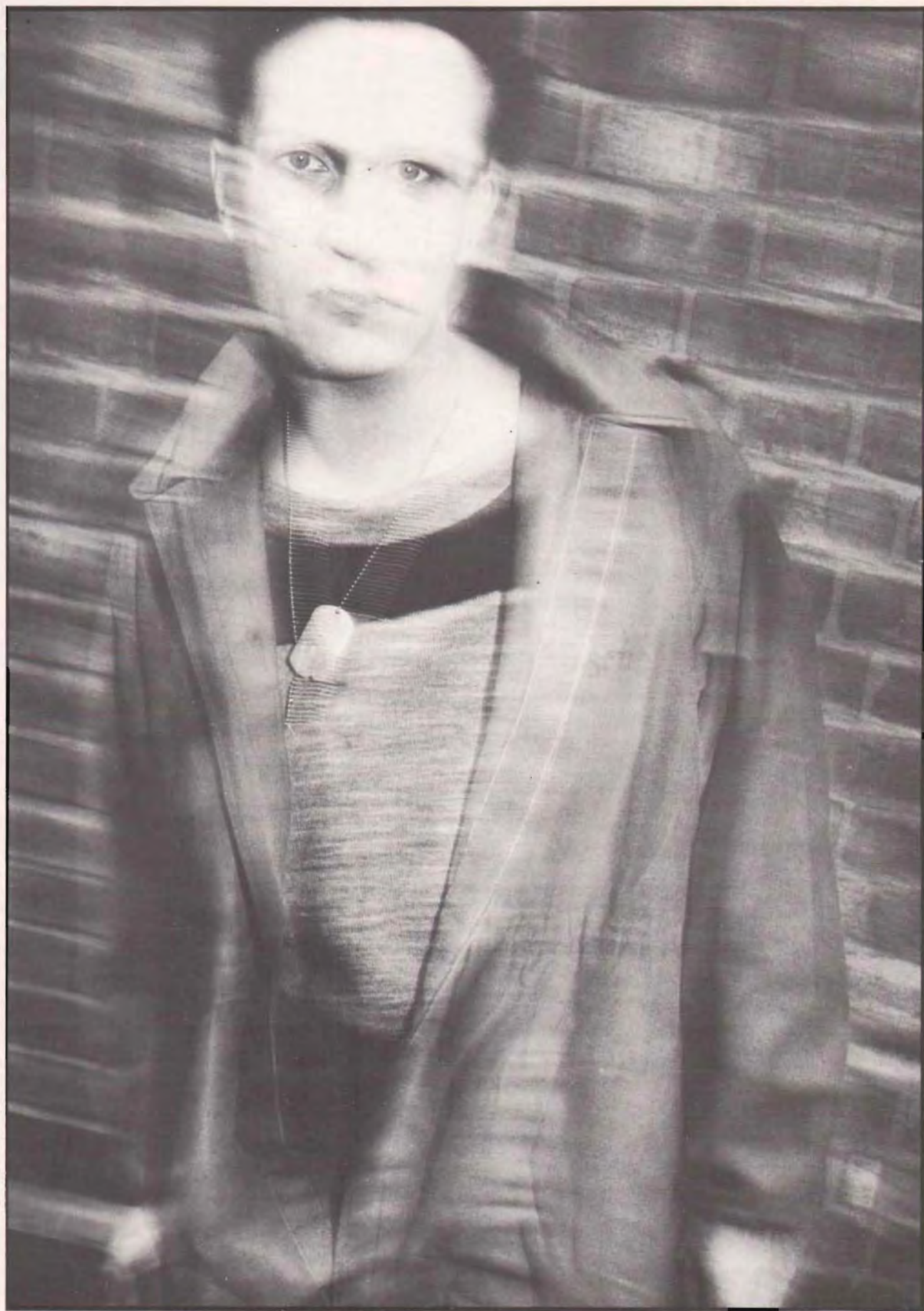
Kim (laughs): Yeah.

Sheila (entering suddenly): The car's arrived, Kim.

As Miss Wilde gathers her belongings she reveals to Simon that some day she'd like to work with Dusty Springfield, her heroine. With that the pop singer, her press officer and the journalist leave, the latter mentally sorting the evening's bizarre activities, happy in the knowledge that his sight could return at any moment. Just like Monica told him. Curtain.

● Interview William Shaw
● Photograph Martin Thompson

CATCHING ABS



Stephen Mallinder

STEPHEN MALLINDER describes the creative process of Cabaret Voltaire thus: "It's like throwing things at the wall and what sticks, sticks."

Coming from a member of a group which

BLITZ

is capable of tempting the music press into some of its most esoteric prose, that seems like a very neat way of putting it. Cabaret Voltaire throw things at the wall to see what sticks.

At times it may have seemed like they were in amongst the sort of company that wanted to knock the wall right down—if the metaphor will stretch that far—but Cabaret Voltaire seem to be far more interested in what can be thrown rather than acts of demolition.

GIVE OR take a few months, it's more or less Cabaret Voltaire's tenth anniversary year. It was in 1975 that the original line-up of Mallinder, Kirk and Watson issued their first cassette, but they'd been experimenting with tape recorders and oscillators for a year or so before that. As the story goes, their live performances confronting the musical status quo of the time were capable of inducing acts of considerable physical hostility in their audiences.

But when people stopped chucking things and took to buying their records, they found themselves in the company of others making similarly post-industrial noises. But while contemporaries like Throbbing Gristle, A Certain Ratio, Clock DVA and Joy Division mutated or faded away, Cabaret Voltaire thrived in a quiet way, diversifying into ambitious video projects, becoming more accessible, and ever more accepted. And though this may never have been translated into major financial success, these men are everywhere cited with great respect as Major Influences.

But does this mean that Richard Kirk and Stephen Mallinder are rebels no more?

"You've got to see it from a subjective point of view," explains Stephen quietly, politely. "For us to actually contrive something that's rebellious now would be false. I'm not saying that we're not rebellious now, but we've had to progress from those very raw days. We were just a symptom of the times. It's just an inevitable thing. Really, I mean, we couldn't just stand still for ten years and wait for when music became very monotonous like it was in the seventies. Though we're not a very violent antithesis of Howard Jones or whatever, we are an antithesis, the opposite side of the coin in a different sort of way."

So though Howard Jones may require some sort of violent antithesis, we shall have to look elsewhere for that. Cabaret Voltaire are far more interested in how we perceive the world than how we change it. On their most recent single *Sensoria* they may juxtapose a clip of tape of a Ku Klux Klansman intoning 'Do Right. Always Work. Respect Authority' with their electro backing, but even if the crafty reviewer tells you otherwise, don't look here for a specific message. They were just interested to see if it stuck to the wall.

AT THE SAME time that the interview was taking place and not much more than a mile away, some 470 people, described by the evening news as anarchists, animal rights protesters and cyclists, were finding them-

selves gazing out of the backs of police vans. Most were to be released a few hours later, some to be charged with obstruction or criminal damage. The City did not Stop.

Stevo, the garrulous mouth behind Some Bizzare, thought that it would be funny if this article was illustrated with a photograph of Steven Mallinder throwing a brick at a police van (to see if it would stick?). Mallinder, however, indicated that it would not be appropriate.

"In areas like that," he says after Stevo had joyfully departed to take a look at the civil disobedience, "I can sympathize, but much as I agree with a lot of the things there, I couldn't put my weight behind it. I don't see why I should lie to myself."

"All well and good if people like Paul Weller seem as if they know there's a correct answer—that's up to them—but I certainly wouldn't put myself in that position because I don't know. In terms of politics, in terms of philosophy, in terms of religion, I don't know."

Now there's always been a certain amount of mystique surrounding Cabaret Voltaire. So if one of the key words on Mallinder's lips is communication, what exactly is he trying to communicate?

"Well that's it. To say we actually wanted to communicate something sounds like I'm contradicting myself, because I'm saying I haven't got an answer, I'm not politically motivated or whatever. What I'm saying is we wanted to create some stir in a different way although we didn't actually know the answers. We wanted to point people in a different direction. We wanted to stir things, to challenge things—that was the notion we were communicating."

No one really expects the fickle world of pop to be able to change a great deal anyway. But Cabaret Voltaire are one of those groups who have gathered up an impenetrable reputation that might imply that something momentous is going on. The full weight of obfuscation of some of the more literary members of the press has been put behind them, and Cabaret Voltaire seem to revel in it.

They've been called 'propagandists', 'industrial mysticists', 'avant garde electro-dance'. Stephen says he finds the labels interesting, but he won't say whether they're right or wrong, or even that they make him snigger.

"I think that's partly in the nature of ourselves. People look on us as being slightly esoteric and are never quite able to pin it down. It's good. We never like to put things cleanly in black and white. There's always very large areas of grey where there is ambiguity, where it's left open to interpretation. It's not like we believe our own press, but it's quite nice when people say we must be such and such."

"It's something that we're conscious of. It's not actually something we've tried to propagate ourselves, but it's something that's built up around us. And it's not something that we feel obliged to keep to—in a lot of ways we try to play it off. It's not a case of hating the tags we've had, hating the images. It's more a case of saying it's good to throw it off and actually see it in a different way."

Stephen gives an example: the title of the new LP *Micro-phonies*. A ridiculous word, he says, that sounded quite nice and was discovered as the title of a Three Stooges film. The interviewer looks a little surprised at his unexpected candour.

"The other reason for it," he adds, "is that everybody hates it."

AS AN ATTEMPT to demystify the mystifiers, this interview is a little ridiculous. Stephen Mallinder leads you a merry dance. Probably not too intentionally, but his polite answers tend to take you nowhere very specific. The man will not be pinned down.

Ask him who his heroes are and he'll tell you he's not sure if he has any.

Ask him to give an example of something he regards as genius and he says it's not something he thinks he can quantify.

Ask him about his favourite films and he'll talk about the elements he can appreciate in many of them.

So I ask if this is what Stephen Mallinder wanted to be when he grew up.

"Not really. I knew I didn't want to work very much, that's a fact. I did literally fall into it. I went to college because I didn't particularly want to do any job. I knew that I'd get involved in something that wasn't totally mainstream. Although we're not intellectuals and we're not arty, working in a bank or working as an insurance clerk and going to the match on Saturday never appealed to me, so by inclination I saw myself doing something in music. I never went to art college or anything like that. I had a guitar when I was ten years old but it broke and I never really used it again."

"But I didn't feel like I *had* to do *this*, although I probably did feel a burning desire to do *something*. It makes it all sound a bit lackadaisical, the way I fell into it, like I don't know what I'm doing here or anything, as if nobody'd miss me. I don't want to put myself down too much. I still have a burning desire to actually do something, something that is communicative, something that does actually fire a spark."

"We drifted into being a group, but we did actually want to do something. We did actually want to antagonize. We were rebellious but music was the obvious thing to do because it didn't have the intellectual artistic snobbery and also we wanted to communicate something fast, we wanted something with feedback. Music is the main thing. It is popular culture and that's why we used it. It was part of us. It was what we'd been brought up on. We knew its workings. Even though we weren't a pop group, the machinery of pop music was what we initially could use to express it. The same goes for working in film now."

I had been forewarned of Cabaret Voltaire's tendency in interviews to remain vaguely and quietly serious. As the interview closed, I enquired as to just where amongst all this was the room for *frivolity*. Mallinder's dark eyes lit up a bit.

"Well that's it. We come across as extremely serious in interviews like this, justifying ourselves. But there's a hell of a lot of fun in what we do. A hell of a lot of it we do for a laugh. We never really furrow our brows over anything. It's not as soul searching as people think."

"I mean," he concludes, "most of the stuff we do, we do drunk anyway."

Now that's what I want to hear. Cast aside images of Cabaret Voltaire as the post-industrial pessimists and imagine this. Two rather drunk men standing in front of a wall and throwing things at it, then examining what sticks and what falls off. ●

Purple prose and Apollonia's underwear
•Floy Joy—bring a hybrid home today
•Jody Watley and life after Shalamar •
Berntholer—My Suitor and Statelessness
•Plus: Torch Song, Virna Lindt, Penguin Cafe Orchestra.

T • R • A • X



Apollonia 6 in their lingerie (Apollonia is the one in the middle).

• "I always wore lingerie. I don't wear it to sleep 'cos it's uncomfortable, you know. But I've always dressed like this. I like wearing black chaps with underwear underneath..."

Black chaps?

"Yeah. They're like leather trousers, but they're open around here and..."

Ah.

Apollonia Kotero was very keen for me to know that she's *always* worn 'lonsheray,' as she calls it. She also wanted me to know that her favourite colour has *always* been purple ("all my school pictures, I'm wearing a purple dress"), and (of course!) when it came to auditions, the music she would *always* use was... 1999 and *Little Red Corvette* ("I had the cassette with me at all times. I knew him through his music").

Wearing lingerie aside, I expect a conversation with the Pope would go a bit like an interview with Apollonia—you know, whatever the subject, 'He' just keeps cropping up. Only in this case He is small and sulky and wears a moustache. During the interview He gazes down at us from the wall somewhere behind my left shoulder. Apollonia is wearing one of His outfits. We are indeed in The Presence. So when she tells me that the period between her first audition for *Purple*

Rain and getting the part was just (wait for it!) seven days, I don't even bat an eyelid...

Yep, for on the seventh day Prince created a replacement for his former girlfriend Vanity who was originally going to be in the film but then wasn't and, like, nobody's quite sure if she jumped or if she was pushed but anyway they do all these auditions and they find this new girl and suddenly she's Prince's girlfriend and her name's right up there and the group that used to be called Vanity 6 is now called Apollonia 6 and the first single is called *Sex Shooter* and *pow!* it's in with a bullet even if it isn't that great and then there's the album which isn't great either but Warners like it so much that they've insisted on a video for every track and, well, a star is born, really. Or created. But she doesn't see it that way. And she'd like to point out that she's always worn lingerie...

Anyway, Apollonia used to sing in nightclubs and make minor appearances on TV shows. She describes herself as Latin-German-Jewish, which sounds a bit like an A-level course. And despite the saucy bits in *Purple Rain* she is actually very modest and yes, she is religious. Which is quite important when you're

working with Him (the other one). "I remember the first evening that I met him, he asked me, 'Do you believe in God?' I said, 'Of course, otherwise I wouldn't be here.' And then he asked me, 'Are you hungry?' We walked out of the office and went to a cafe and he had a cup of tea and I had a fruit juice and we didn't eat. We immediately got along."

And now they're best buddies! "He's my mentor, my brother, my father, my sister, my mother, my spiritual lover... I remember the first time I auditioned in Los Angeles it was raining and the sky was like a red, a purple, and I thought, 'How weird—the movie is *Purple Rain*. This is a coincidence.' But these little things happen all the time. We have the same dreams certain nights, you know, it's very odd."

Apollonia talks to Prince every other day, she has dreams about him, she sees him as often as she can. He's her friend and she says that talking about him is about talking about herself. So it's no surprise that when I ask her if she doesn't think there's something a bit odd about him, she says:

"Pardon?"

You know, isn't he a bit strange?

"He's very mysterious, he's very

unpredictable. That's the way he is. I always tease him that he's a verbally conservative gentleman. Because he is. But when you see him, even in his kitchen, he is *still* bigger than life. I remember one day we were in the kitchen—I like his kitchen a lot 'cos I go cook there for him—and right by where he washes his dishes—well *he* doesn't wash dishes—"

I expect he just smashes them up from time to time...

"No, he has someone in to do them for him. Anyway, he has this big window and I would stand there and stare at him and just drift away. One day I asked him, 'Is there one thing you *don't* know how to do?' And he sat there, dazed, trying to figure it out. And then he suddenly said, 'I can't cook... but I can make babies.' See! That's how he is."

Yes, quite. But what's the connection exactly?

"I don't know! I don't know. I guess you have to cook to keep a man happy and if you keep a man happy you can have babies. That's the way I look at it... But he does make great scrambled eggs."

I hadn't the heart to ask if she's always liked scrambled eggs...

□ TIM HULSE

Virna Lindt



● Nibbling at the highly polished edges of anything to do with Compact Records is a notoriously nerve racking affair, such is the label's determinedly self-created mystique. In setting up an interview a journalist is more than likely to speak to scores of allegedly different people on the phone, all with suspiciously similar sounding voices. Off trip the executive tags—Tot Taylor, Vivi Bach, Rex Luxore, Teddy Johns, 'Derek' . . . and **Virna Lindt**. Ah, Virna, heart of this strange affair and reason for my standing on the steps of the Compact House skyscraper armed with tape recorder and autograph book.

Only the surly amongst you can fail to acknowledge the splendour of Virna Lindt's new *I Experienced Love* single and equally thrilling *Shiver* LP, the epitome of Compact's sleek, chic sixties tease. With both looking set to skedaddle into at least the lower reaches of the charts, perhaps the

startling talents of Ms Lindt are about to be acknowledged at last.

The first shock comes on introduction to Virna. Her English is impeccable, proving by a sort of double bluff that she *has* to be genuinely Swedish. After all, if she was just a Swedish Compact Joke she would say, "zis" and "zat". She says "this", and "that" and quite a lot else. I spend most of the time listening and desperately looking for fibs in her recounting of *How She Got Where She Is Today*. Clutching the biography so conveniently (too conveniently?) given to me at the door by a Compact minion, I search for discrepancies with little success. Your guess as to the facts of the matter is as good as mine, but I think we can throw out for a start her claims to have been a spy. Equally certainly we can believe that she is Swedish, 24, an interpreter, an ex-model (having appeared on fifteen different magazine covers), a journalist (a sort of Swedish Julie Burchill), an actress, a graphic artist and a pop star. As for the rest of the information gleaned from the interview, we'll pick any eight from the following—Virna had worked with Ingmar Bergman before she was 21; with Mai Zetterling soon after; she is related to the Lindt chocolate family; her favourite pastime is 'eating chocolate with boys'; her favourite music is Bernard Herrman's theme to Hitchcock's *Vertigo*; her only live appearance was at Les Bains-Douches in Paris with a snow machine outside the door . . .

Interrupting the flow of perfectly believable, but still rather suspicious facts, I hurl in my last resort question: "So what's Sweden like then, Virna?"

"It is a strange place. Its outside influences are solely from Britain and America, and yet the essential mood of the country is one of non-conformity. It's normal there to be a hardened cynic and to trust no one, which is all very well, but it makes any real protest totally harmless. It's the same with films, they're dismissed unless they're MEANINGFUL. Apparently they wanted Spielberg to cut scenes out of *Raiders* when it was shown over there because they didn't *mean* anything!"

Virna's music is itself hardly the most profound musical contribution to rock's rich hearthrug. It is, however, a supremely superficial wash of wistful themes to imaginary TV shows and films. Check out *Underwater Boy* with its 'Aqua Marina' overtones, and *Dossier On Virna Lindt*, an unashamed breathy rip-off of Jane Birkin's autobiographical *Jane B* in collision with one of the icy Scandinavian blondes that Michael Caine always used to meet. Remember the stylishly ambient meaninglessness of the pre-'69 Eurovision Song Contest? There you will find the seeds of Virna Lindt.

"Fifty percent of people are going to hate everything I do, probably because they take it seriously."

The LP should be widely available soon, and Virna will also be heard on the next *NME* tape, that is if she has completed the numerous TV documentaries that she is currently involved in ("one is about Stockholm where even the down-and-outs wear expensive clothes"). Expect to hear an awful lot of Virna Lindt this winter, there's a good chance that a fair bit of it might be true.

□ PAUL MATHUR

madness

S A Y!

zarjazz!

★ interview by marc issue • photographs by nick knight

EARLIER THIS year Madness, the popular entertainment group, and Stiff, the record company, dissolved their union. As unions go in the popular entertainment industry, it had been a long and fruitful one, yielding many successful chart hits and giving pleasure, as obituaries for entertainers generally have it, to many. The dissolution of this union was not entirely amicable. The parties separated at a fairly brisk pace, and certain accusations were bandied about, none of which will be of any interest at all this time next month, and need not concern us today.

Stiff have stayed Stiff, and Madness have inaugurated their own record label, and named it 'Zarjazz.' Their recording artistes include former Undertone Feargal Sharkey, former Scritti person Tom Morley, and the North London Skiffle'n'Blues group Skiffskats. Madness will henceforth determine their own recording schedule, and release their own records at their leisure...

So far, so good.

Here I am, crouched in the Zarjazz sofa, about to interview Suggs and Carl—one third of Madness, the section that I have least difficulty naming—about their new enterprise, and I am full of good intentions, but I cannot banish the conviction from my mind that *there are precious few sensible questions you can ask members of Madness anyway...*

Suggs and Carl are looking at me rather expectantly, and I look back at them. We smile at each other. Clearly, an interview of some

description has just begun, but there's no sound coming out. I had better ask them about something. Think fast! I know!

Marc: (cough)... Does 'Zarjazz' mean anything in particular?

Suggs: The word itself is an exclamation of happiness. It's from the 2000AD comic book, but it's from a specific planet...

Carl: It's a Betelgeusian word...

Suggs: It's just an exclamation of extreme happiness...

Carl: It means that something is really brilliant.

Why did you start your own label rather than sign contracts with someone else's?

Suggs: We'd already thought about setting up our own label before we left Stiff, really. We'd put a few people onto Stiff before, so we thought we'd do it ourselves. We got involved with the choir (*The Gospel Choir With The Very Long Name I Can't Remember And Can't Be Bothered To Look Up*) and we were going to make the first record with them, but Stiff snapped them up while we were away on tour. At that stage we were going to start up the label with another company while we finished the two more albums we had to do for Stiff, but as it turned out we needed the label anyway, because we had nowhere else to go.

How long will Madness be supporting Zarjazz financially?

Suggs: No time at all—obviously it's our responsibility to get the finance, but it's not actually our money, it's Virgin's money. The ▶





only thing we've supported financially is the studio, which we built, and that's something that we'll always be able to use, so we won't be spending any money, really. The label will last as long as Virgin are interested in it.

Is everything you release going to be aimed at the charts?

Suggs: We did make a conscious decision about that—with Feargal's record, obviously, it's something that's going to get a lot of airplay, and we'll push it like other record companies will push other hit singles. But the Skiffskats record will be put out as a fairly limited release...

In Kentish Town and environs...?

Suggs: (chuckles) ... Yeah... we do have a certain pressure on us to have hits—not all hits, but the ones we decide are going to be hits had better be hits...

Have you got a long shopping list of people you want to sign up?

Suggs: No, not at all. There aren't that many good people around, and most of them get snapped up really quickly. I don't know if things have changed, or whether it's always been like that.

Do you go out and see many bands playing live?

Suggs: ...er, no. The last show I went to see was Frank Sinatra, that was alright, I don't know who the last band I went to see before that was. I'm going to see The Woodentops on Friday...

SOME READERS may well be going "Ah-ha!" at this point, BUT the above exchange wasn't a very reasonable one. The fact of the matter is that discovering new talent by scouring the concert circuit belongs to the realm of fairytales—it is not based in fact; and in starting up a record label which releases records that old friends have made, Madness are entering into a definite tradition. Madness themselves had their first record released on 2-Tone (described in black and white as "an old pal's label" in the sleeve notes of *Complete Madness*) and while *The Prince* wasn't exactly a milestone in pop history, these entertainers did go on to greater things. More recently, Mr Paul Weller has erected his Respond thing on much the same basis, notwithstanding the vestments of the Church of the Second Jam Tomorrow... which reminds me...

Is there going to be any kind of unified image for the label? ... like Respond?

Suggs: It won't be like that at all!
Carl: ... because it isn't like that within Madness. We haven't got one person dictating to everyone else, and it's the same with the record label. We've all got different tastes, we all realise that, so we'll put out anything we all think is good, regardless of ... style.

So the label won't have a strong image...?

Carl: Not in the way I think you mean...

I'm not sure what I mean, that's why I'm asking you.

Carl: It'll have an image in terms of the way the label is seen, but we'll be signing the bands for their music...

Suggs: We want people to see the label and think that this is going to be a good record, just from seeing the logo—obviously this is something that we can only hope for. But the bands won't be in any particular style...



THE GREATEST of the many beauties of Madness is, I believe, that to think of them as pop stars at all requires a certain amount of concentration. We tend to sort out our memories, experiences and associations into neat piles for future use, so that we know where to find them later. When a journalist racks what brains he has for questions to ask pop stars in an interview situation, he (or she) will rummage through the pile of experiences marked 'Pop groups' first. I didn't find Madness in that pile at all, because they merge so perfectly with everyday life that I'd sorted them away with things like "Going to the Launderette," "Watching The Neighbours Do Strange Things To Their Cars" and "Remembering To Send Old Smelly A Birthday Card." Madness are one of those things I've always taken absolutely for granted, like the newsagents, the postman and crisp packets. Maybe that's why it feels so odd trying to interview them like they were the Thompson Twins or something...

Did I read somewhere that you said there wouldn't be any more Motowns?

Suggs: There isn't going to be a situation where one person is going to tell a lot of other people what they've got to do. It isn't like that anymore, I don't think people accept that anymore...

It's an appealing thought, though, isn't it?

Suggs: It's an appealing thought, but I don't

think it'd be very enjoyable, exploiting people—maybe we *could* go round looking for younger people—kids? Is that what they're called?—and just get them to sing our songs, and we'd play on the records, we'd do everything... but I don't think that would be much fun, really... Just as you can't have another Motown, you can't have things ideologically the way you'd like them, insofar as you do have to be a businessman to a certain extent when you're running a record company. It's a very boring thing to realise that you can't be brilliantly idealistic, you can't float over it, you have to compromise. Hopefully we will, and it won't be forced down an alley...

Would it be preferable not to have a big deal made out of having your own label?

Suggs: It'd be preferable not to be associated with the groups all the time—I suppose that means the label as well...

So that's why you never called it Madness Records... Do you think you've been moving towards Family Entertainment over the years?

Suggs: I think what happened was that we turned into a pop band and we didn't think we were, you know? We didn't *want* to be, we just *were*...

It would be a pretty strange sort of thing to want to be...

Suggs: ... it became a kind of kitsch thing—like, Elvis Costello doing pop records...

(Then they both talked at once for a while, and just as I was beginning to think that neither of them was answering the question...)

Suggs: ... but we didn't see ourselves as family entertainment, that's not what we aim for.

Carl: It's all down to what other people think of us, and we probably don't always realise what other people think...

Suggs: The thing is, you know... we don't really have any idea of what... we don't try to project anything as a... a *vision*, we just do what we... do...

How does having a label of your own help you do what you do?

Suggs: It just gives us more say, I suppose, over what goes on. Which means that hopefully there'll be less wrangling and arguing about what we should be doing... before, we always had Dave Robinson pushing us into doing things, which we won't have now... that was something we didn't agree with towards the end of our relationship with Stiff anyway, and that's the biggest difference, not having someone deciding what you should be doing all the time...

And you don't have to draw up contracts with yourselves!

Suggs: No! ... Funny, isn't it?

FUNNY? I'll say it is! Madness striking a blow for workers' autonomy at their time of life! It makes perfect sense that they should set up their own label so they can run their lives how they want *and* get a few new sounds onto vinyl while they're about it. It wouldn't make sense for them to run around the West End doing Berry Gordy impressions, anymore than it would make sense for them to... to, I dunno, take up gender-bending...

Hold on a minute! Berry Gordy impressions? Gender-bending? Lads, I've just had this idea for a movie...



Julian Cope

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● I greeted **Berntholer** with jovial cynicism when they were first described to me. Albania? Brussels? *My Suitor*? Oh, really?

I filed them away, without hearing the music, under 'John Peel material' and left it at that. A few weeks later I was handed a tape, and shown a photograph—not a particularly flattering photograph, as I recall—and I was sent home to listen. 'Blitz material,' I was told. I'm still not sure what *that* is exactly, but it took about two and a half hearings to persuade me, and I think I've been playing *My Suitor* about twice a day ever since, without ever quite working out what it is that I find so appealing about the record. She recalls Nico, amongst a very few others. Mostly she stands eerily alone, disconnected. So what gives?

First of all, Berntholer is the band, not the singer. The singer's name is Drita Kotaji (which will be fine once we get the hang of it. Remember the trouble we all had pronouncing 'Lene Lovich' when she came along?). She was born of Albanian parents, and moved to Belgium. She's stateless. She met the rest of the band at university while she was studying journalism. She says—in halting, but perfectly adequate English—that she writes about Life, and Everything, and that it's very difficult to explain. She says that her preoccupations will not become any clearer with future releases, either. She converses in French, but always writes her songs in English, because French is a rigid language, rather formal, and English is fluid, better for expressing whatever it is she wants to express.

I suggest that there is a flavour of the torch song to *My Suitor*—and then I have to explain about torch songs. "No," she says, "it's not really one of those. It's more about Not-Love." Does statelessness have any effect on her. "Paranoia comes easier to stateless people. You will feel sometimes that you don't belong, that wherever you are, you are like a tourist. Sometimes you feel this quite sharply. It's not a superior or inferior way to be, but it's different."

None of this makes me any the wiser about *My Suitor*, but I like the record anyway, and if it hasn't been the autumn's novelty European hit by the time you read this (in which case you'll be sick to death of it), then I would urge you to check it out. By the way, my enquiries about the band's name weren't particularly revealing, either. "Do you know of Virna Lindt?" asked Drita. I said that I did. "At the beginning of her first single, she says, 'Come in, Athens... come in, Berntholer...'"—and that's where we got it from. I don't know what it means. Perhaps it's a village in Sweden, or something...

Some days you just *know* you're not going to learn anything useful at all...

□ MARC ISSUE

Simon Jeffes



● "The **Penguin Cafe Orchestra** was conceived in Japan in 1972, in Kyoto—or a little before that. I've come up with a few neat expressions to explain about the Penguin Cafe since people started asking me about it, but I don't like to use them too often. The Penguin Cafe is home—it's where you feel at home, so in a way it's a state of mind, but a very practical one, not a narrowly defined state. It seems to be saying that the random element in life is more important than the risk that goes with it. There's some contact with this random impulse in Zen Buddhism, and in Dada and Surrealism—certain Twentieth Century figures like Satie are close to it. Anyway, the Penguin Cafe could be the home of our spontaneity, our creative impulse—as opposed to nine to five existence in the city, mortgages, the fear of war and Mrs. Thatcher—opposed to the things that keep people *down*... Sometimes I feel that I've built myself an ivory tower, that it's a haven or an escape, but that aspect of it falls apart very quickly because it's a positive energy that's working, and because all my ideas about the Penguin Cafe would come to nothing without the music.

"I found that I was by nature a composer, but to be a composer in the modern idiom became too much for me, the incredible skills and disciplines required were way beyond me, so I went right back to one note,

and started again from there. I've experimented with that one note in all kinds of different ways. I haven't reached a form that I've mastered and become completely comfortable with, so I can see why I might be called an experimentalist, with a small 'e'. But the word 'experimentalist' is a bit like 'avant garde', which is a completely passé concept. I think.

"I have no idea where the Penguin Cafe Orchestra stands in our culture at all, so I don't know why, or whether, BLITZ readers would be interested in it..."

BLITZ readers should be interested in it, if I may dictate to you for a sentence or two, because sooner or later we get a little tired of fashion music. When pop is exciting and moving, then we can spend a little time with it. When pop is wet and worn and wan and weedy and wally, then we have no need of it. There's plenty of good music outside. The Penguin Cafe Orchestra LP's are as accessible you could wish for. There are no complicated initiation rites involved. All you have to do is to walk into a *proper* record shop, and ask for them. No one will laugh at you, and you play them on your record player just like any other sort. It just takes a little confidence and you can break that pop habit! The latest LP is called *Broadcasting from Home*. Try it.

□ MARC ISSUE



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● Comes a time when you have to examine just why so many people chase that perfect pop beat. **Torch Song** are amongst the pace makers, basking in the after-glow of a dozen kind reviews for their latest LP *Wish Thing*.

On first meeting the trio, you're inclined to be taken in by their earnest aim to "get our music across to as many people as possible," but you don't sign to Miles Copeland's IRS label unless the Harvard Business School ethic is central to your philosophy.

William Orbit weighed up my accusation carefully, his mild air of diffidence prompting his quiet, well measured response.

"Well we need money to keep Torch Song going," William thought some more before his second delivery. "But if you're talking about luxuries, then I'd love to be driven around, because I hate it behind the wheel. It needn't be a big car, I don't crave ostentatious wealth. Does that answer your question?"

Not really.

"Funny you should question our motives as a group, though, because we spend a lot of time trying to work out why we do certain things."

Desperate to keep Torch Song away from the standard replies given to various lines of questioning in previous interviews, I prodded William for some political invective. I mean, why not? It is Party Conference season after all.

"Well I get very upset about the possible armageddon. That fear usually strikes me when I'm on my own in the bath or something. I hear a

jet go over and think, 'This could be the one that drops the bomb.' Then it comes home to you that all the things you've been striving for could end in an instant."

William looked almost heartbroken as the full impact of his statement came home to roost. So what to do? Would Torch Song twist their relationship with IRS to a point where the company could become the perfect vehicle to highlight the trio's broad aims, deep desires and petty nuances? Can Torch Song do their bit to change the world?

A lengthy pause ensued, during which I was tempted to qualify my question still further, but resisted.

"If we feel strongly enough about something we'll say it and take the consequences," William gazed at me, satisfied that he'd encapsulated a head full of prose into one sentence.

It was a question I put to the other two members of Torch Song, singer Laurie and studio manager Grant. Neither, it seemed, wanted to challenge the existing order. Maybe it's because they've secured a big record company advance, or it might be me OD-ing on worthiness.

The wordplay was over. We never got to know each other well. I think it was the curious mix of artistry and calculation that threw me. The sharp grey light and cool air of the nearby canal stung my face as I left. I hurried away from our meeting place unable to look back.

□ SIMON POTTER.

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WRITE TO GUTTERHEARTS, 54 LUCY,
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● Yes, it is Kate Garner, who has spent the last year extricating herself from RCA Records and has now signed to The Love Organisation (otherwise known as Paul Caplan's new TLO label). Expect a single after Christmas. Kate was recently offered the job as presenter on a new music programme based in the Midlands. Will she take it? She says she doesn't know. Meanwhile, she's still pursuing her original calling as a photographer and is hoping to get a book published. What are you going to call it, Kate? "Something like 'Unknown Beauties and Unsung Heroes'."

Photographs by Johnny Rozsa. Make-up by Jenette Rivers. Styling by Andra at Marco Rasala.



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Floy Joy

● "I saw the look you gave her/ and when I saw you later/ you had a golden splinter in your eye/ you dress up like a killer/ you're wearing out the mirror/ and all you've got to tell me in reply/ (you say) baby you know I, you know that I..."

This eminently believable fragment is written by Shaun and Michael Ward, who used to be part of Clock DVA, and sung by top lovers' rock singer, Carroll Thompson. It can be found on the **Floy Joy** LP, *Into The Hot*, produced by Don Was. A pretty dreamy combination, and practically true.

"We were trying to make something interesting for us to listen to as well as other people... we write for ourselves, and hopefully we please; well, we are pleasing a lot more people by doing that..."

Their admirable desires also ran to a choice producer.

"We thought that Don was the best person around in the world to do it..."

Although sympathetic to the duo's wishes (Carroll came later), Virgin's budget for their new signing did not run to such extravagance without a

struggle. But being soulful lads they just went ahead and did it.

"We sat around and talked about it for ages, then Shaun just said, 'Let's go and see him.' I thought, 'Perfect. Why not?' We were so lucky, because we just set off with some money, and we were going to fly to Detroit, from New York, but there weren't any flights. Not that we could afford. But he was in New York, which was amazing because he doesn't spend much time there, so we just went to his hotel to see him, found out where he was staying from Geffen (*Records*). We played the tapes and talked about how we wanted to treat the tracks, and he said, 'I'll do it.' Brilliant! Afterwards we went down to Greenwich Village and got really pissed, out of our heads. We were elated! But then the work started. It's like always wanting to play at Carnegie Hall, (fill in the wild ambition of your choice: swoon at your leisure), and getting there, but realising that you've got to play now. So then we had to go to Detroit and start work. It was hard work, but it was enjoyable, a lot of the time."



So what's in your grooves?
 "It's not complicated, the music on that album, a lot of it is quite simple. It relies on melody and feeling more than anything else ... it's not formulaised I don't think."

"There are two ballads on the LP which are quite different from each other. One being from the American Soul Tradition, and *Sebastapol*, which has a more European feel to it. Well I think it has anyway. Some melodies and some sounds just suggest things to you."

The one from the American Soul Tradition, the current 45, *Until You Come Back To Me*, is brilliantly interpreted by Carroll Thompson. Her introduction to Floy Joy was a priceless idea.

"I heard the music first, and I really liked it. So I did a few demos, and then we met and tried it out in a studio. We just got on and took it from there. Reggae's important to me, but I still wanted to try something else as well."

"I started off with Gospel. Started off in the church. Then I went into funk and soul, then into reggae. Then

into pop."

At which Sean raises an eyebrow:

"You trying to say we're Pop?"

And Carroll laughs:

"Well ... popular music ... well, in comparison to reggae ... what can you call it ... oh, into hybrid!"

Mmmmm. 'Bring A Hybrid Into Your Home'. One of yours, Michael?

"Yeah. A marketing device. You always regret those things after a while."

"Yeah, 'Pop' is a funny word, because reggae is popular, and funk is popular ..." says Carroll.

Amongst other things, Floy Joy, you have aroused a suspicion in some strange quarters that you are Pop brains abusing the body of Soul music ... How do you plead?

"We didn't try to do a pastiche of anything. *Until You Come Back To Me* is a soul ballad. It's not a pastiche. It's more like a nod to your roots, I suppose ... what you liked, and what you still like."

□ MARK CORDERY

The Room -
 New Album *IN EVIL HOUR* - RED 

THE ROOM
 IN EVIL HOUR



● When **Jody Watley** was in her last year of school she was dancing on the US television programme *Soul Train* for a Kentucky Fried Chicken lunch and all the good will she could grab. At the time, she was aiming for a career as a professional dancer, so it came as a surprise when a record company approached her (and her friend Jeffrey Daniel) to be in a group called Shalamar.

"I used to stand in front of the mirror in my bedroom pretending to be Diana Ross but it never occurred to me that it was anything but make believe. The opportunity to be a singer just fell into my lap, which is odd when you think how many people strive for so long and get nowhere. That's why I worked my tail off to make sure I was worthy of such a lucky break."

And work she did, along with the others, to take Shalamar from a group of anonymous session musicians to a high profile, singing, dancing, fashion conscious soul success.

In spite of the stern guidance of producer and mastermind Leon

Sylvers, or perhaps because of it, the group began to grow artistically until Sylvers' guiding hand began to feel more like a stranglehold. Jody was the first to leave the fold.

"I don't think anybody believed I was serious until I actually packed my bags and left. They kept saying, 'She's just upset, she'll come around—you know how *girls* are.' But it really had got to the point where there wasn't any incentive to patch up even the most petty disagreements. When I left it wasn't so much to pursue a solo career as it was to avoid a nervous breakdown."

"The big difference now is I don't have to do what I'm told. I'm involved from the writing to the demo to the finished product. I'm a lot stronger—that's something you pick up from spending a long time on the road with thirteen guys! These days I'm not afraid to speak my mind."

Good thing too, because after basking in the warmth of a successful group, plunging into the cold waters of a solo career can be quite a shock—particularly for a young female with no real reputation.

"That's one of the reasons that I came to London and signed with an English company. In the States it's very difficult for a female artist to prove that she can be more than just a cute face and a pair of legs. Over here you're expected to be more."

She may not be able to belt out a song like Alison Moyet or Helen Terry but Jody has a lot more going for her than just sex appeal. Chances are you'll be hearing a lot more of her in the future.

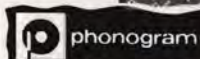
□ PAT THOMAS

ZERRA I

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- ☐ Often ☐ Occasionally
☐ Rarely ☐ Never

***Club**

- ☐ Often ☐ Occasionally
☐ Rarely ☐ Never

***Pub/Bar**

- ☐ Often ☐ Occasionally
☐ Rarely ☐ Never

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● 4 - AUTUMN 81

Andy Summers of Police reveals all; Raiders of the Lost Ark; Gilbert & George; Haircut 100 - the first interview; James Cameron, gentleman journalist.

● 5 - WINTER 81/82

Stephen Linard & Fiona Dealey graduate shows; Marianne Faithfull; The Rock Press; Belle Stars; Patrick Caulfield.

● 6 - SPRING 82

Hunter Thompson interview; The sartorial elegance of Nick Heyward; Mick Karn, Kim Wilde, Ronny and The Belle Stars; Gregory's Girl director Bill Forsyth; Ugly George.

● 9 - JAN/FEB 83

Paul Weller and Tony Marchant; Sade; Russ Meyer; Films of Andy Warhol; Angus McBean and the surrealist photographers; The Evil Dead; Brookside - the Phil Redmond interview;

● 10 - APRIL 83

Paul Morley interview; French & Saunders; Everything But The Girl; Tim Page's Vietnam; Return of the Jedi preview; Alternative Interiors I; Frank Zappa; Night Style.



● 11 - MAY 83

Julian Cope: What's wrong with British Advertising; Dennis Hopper; Bowie - The Hunger preview; Art video; Worst of Hollywood; Martin Sheen; Pete Shelley.



● 13 - JULY/AUG 83

The Record Sleeve designers - Ian Wright, Neville Brody, Da Gama, David Band; Rick Baker - special effects extraordinaires; Yello; Tony Wilson; Jack Kerouac and Joyce Johnson; Paul Haig.



● 18 - FEBRUARY 84

Peter Murphy - Bauhaus to Arthouse; Alternative Interiors II; Echo & The Bunnymen; Music television; Kathy Acker; Innervision; Simple Minds; Steve Jansen and Richard Barbieri; Divine.



● 19 - MARCH 84

Paul Weller; Keith Allen; Linton Kwesi Johnson; Feargal Sharkey; Robbie Coltrane; Young people in Russia; Sam Fuller; Bourgie Bourgie; Elliott Gould.



● 21 - MAY 84

Marilyn and Joan Rivers; Morrissey; Billy Mackenzie & The Associates; Famous bodies laid bare; Cocteau Twins; Lloyd Cole; Noel Quarless; Robert Fripp; Yip Yip Coyote; King.



● 22 - JUNE 84

David Sylvian - exclusive preview of his photographs and interview; Steve Davis, Gary Glitter, Sylvia Kristel; Muhammad Ali; Everything But The Girl; Perry Haines; Tilbrook & Difford; Cartoonists; Jermaine Jackson.



● 23 - JULY/AUG 84

Frankie Goes To Hollywood; King Sunny Ade; Hi-NRG; Supergirl; The Redskins; Prince Charles; Nick Heyward; Promo Videomakers; Subway Art.

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● 24 - SEPTEMBER 84

Extra special second official birthday issue: Duran's Nick Rhodes; Gary Kemp; Two years of the Best of BLITZ; Mel Smith; BLITZ/Olympus photography results; Company of Wolves; Fela Kuti; Don Letts; Tim Roth.



● 25 OCTOBER 84

Boy George writes about the media; Neil Kinnock & The Pursuit of Grooviness - the selling of Labour; Aztec Camera; Shock Headed Peters; Miles Copeland; Nicholas Coleridge; The history of the showroom dummy.

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